

Moscow, PLO discuss Gulf

MOSCOW (AP) — Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh met with members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Executive Committee Friday to explore ways to end the war in the Gulf, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Vitaly Churkin said Mr. Bessmertnykh hosted Mahmoud Abbas and Yasser Arafat at the Foreign Ministry to discuss the possible spread of the war and its potential for endangering the international situation. "Bessmertnykh said it was necessary to find a formula that would provide for a possibility for Iraqi troops to withdraw from Kuwait and stop military hostilities, that would provide for a political settlement in the Persian Gulf and, later on, help to carry out work relating to the problems of the region," Mr. Churkin said at a news briefing. Mr. Bessmertnykh repeated the call for all countries, including Israel, to show restraint and prevent the spread of the war. Mr. Churkin said Soviet diplomatic channels with Iraq remained open in case a "window of opportunity" to end the war emerges.

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'Baghdad will survive ... these are proud people and they will not bow down'

Devastation and defiance

"It was like watching a beautiful woman from afar and then seeing her being transformed into something ugly, like a Medusa. It was hard to connect the vision of the coloured tracer shells shooting up into the sky, the spectacular flashes of missiles and bombs going off in the distance, with what was happening on the ground. While the U.S. says that it has exclusively targeted military related installations, some civilian areas of Baghdad have also been hit. I saw two apartment blocks near the centre of the capital that had been bombed. There is so much hatred of Americans now. People have been threatening to grab pilots who are shot down and chop them into pieces. I heard of one pilot being stoned before he was taken away by guards. For seven days Jordan Times reporter Lamis Andoni watched the bombardment of Baghdad from various vantage points in the Iraqi capital. She tells her story in this article.

IT WAS beautiful and deadly, like seeing a beautiful cobra. You can't deny it is beautiful. It creates a very strange feeling that you can admire something

that causes death. I would close my eyes and every time I would remember people were dying — Iraqis, civilians, soldiers. This was the end of the

beauty. For seven days I observed the bombing of Baghdad, sometimes from my room on the second floor of the Al Rashid hotel, other times from the hotel garden, on occasions by myself, often with others, either in the hotel itself or elsewhere in the city. "It was like watching a beautiful woman from afar and then seeing her being transformed into something ugly, like a Medusa. It was hard to connect the vision of the coloured tracer shells shooting up into the sky, the spectacular flashes of missiles and bombs going off in the distance, with what was happening on the ground. During the days that immediately preceded the war, Iraqis had been starting to say

that their fears of war might come true. But even until the very last minute many still did not believe it. People would ask: 'Will there be a war, is there a chance for us?' On the night before the bombing I went to the house of a Palestinian friend married to an Iraqi, and talked to their teenage children. They were trying to understand what war might mean. We were listening to Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic and all the stories about U.S. military preparations. Suddenly we looked at each other, half mocking and half scared, and said: 'They're preparing all this to attack us.' I remember the teenage girl of the family saying: 'I don't want to die. I want to get married first.'

On the way back to the hotel on the night of Jan. 16 at around 9.30 p.m. the streets were gloomy and deserted. Usually they are busy at that time; now they were early empty. The White House, by now, had told American journalists to leave Baghdad, so we knew something was about to happen. But we didn't believe the attacks would come quite so soon. I was in the NBC office around 2 a.m. when reports came from Washington that war would begin very soon. Then, at about 2.30 a.m., the skies lit up. Many of us felt Baghdad would be destroyed in just a few hours. The hotel, a very strong building, was being buffeted by the explosions. You could feel the impact of the bombs going off.

The lights went out in the hotel, and people were screaming and panicking. We went to the hotel bomb shelter in the basement. There was chaos. The Egyptian waiter who served us dinner was saying: 'I don't want to die here. I came here to work, not to die.' An attractive blonde woman was having a breakdown and being fed valium. At about 3.30 a.m. the basement generator failed and the lights went out. There was complete darkness and people started singing. They sang Palestinian revolutionary songs. People stooped panicking. They felt this might be the end. The first night had a big impact on me. I don't think I will ever forget it. I felt very angry and very sad. As a

Jordanian Palestinian and a journalist, I was losing faith. I was wondering if this was the only way the West could deal with us. I felt a gap was opening up that might not be bridged. As dawn broke on the first day the reports started to circulate in the outside world that Iraqi military power as being smashed. But from the window of my room I couldn't see any sign of damage. It was a strange sensation to see no damage after the storm the night before. After much difficulty finding a driver, I took a car to go "target hunting." I went to the telecommunications building and found that it had been damaged, but not destroyed. Iraqis themselves were shaken by the first bombardment, but they were not defe-

ated. A young Iraqi soldier told me that he was really against the takeover of Kuwait, but that Kuwait at this point was irrelevant. "We have to defend our country, whatever happens," he said. Iraqis have a strong sense of historical awareness. There is not a new country. They cannot accept the idea of their country being eliminated. This comes up in every conversation, one way or another. That day and on the following days I went to the Khazmir area of old Baghdad, where there is a beautiful Shiite mosque. I found people were tired but not desperate. At a fruit shop I met an 11-year-old boy called Ahmad Abdel Salaam

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Iraqi missiles hit Israel, S. Arabia

1 dead, 42 wounded in Tel Aviv; U.S. says Iraqis dumping oil in Gulf

extent of Saudi damage unknown

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQI MISSILES Friday hit Tel Aviv and Haifa in Israel and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, causing at least one death and wounding 42 others in Israel. The extent of casualties or damage caused in the Saudi capital was not immediately available.

It was the fifth attack by the Scud-type missiles on the Jewish state in the past eight days and the first that directly caused a death.

Army officials said that seven missiles, with conventional warheads, were fired, and that the U.S.-supplied Patriot anti-missile system destroyed two of them. Israeli Radio said the Patriots damaged most of the others.

Tel Hashomer hospital in Tel Aviv reported one man died in the attack, from a severe head wound. Forty-two others were

reported injured, including one in critical condition and four moderately wounded.

A Patriot missile destroyed one Iraqi-launched Scud above Riyadh, but another Scud apparently hit the ground without being intercepted, witnesses said.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

Witnesses said they saw a flash as the Scud apparently hit about 10.30 p.m. (1930 GMT) and that no Patriot had risen to meet it as it arced overhead. The other Scud was destroyed over the city, they said.

Smoke billowed from the impact site. It would be the fourth Scud attack on Riyadh since the Gulf war began Jan. 17.

The Riyadh correspondent of the French radio station France-Infos reported seeing a crater near the city's television tower. She said it was not clear if it was

caused by a Scud or falling debris from a Patriot missile.

Ten-minute air raid warnings were sounded in Riyadh, the eastern city of Dhahran and the nearby State of Bahrain.

Before the attack on Riyadh Friday, U.S. military officials said Iraq had launched 22 missiles at Saudi Arabia.

All had either been intercepted by Patriots or allowed to fall into the sea or unpopulated areas.

In earlier attacks on Riyadh, part of a Scud landed in a street. No casualties were reported.

Iraq said its attacks were showing the Arabs' real strength through destroying the "centres of aggression."

"Iraq's decision (to attack Israel) ... comes to avenge the blood of the people of Palestine who were left by the oil regimes

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The U.S. government asserted Friday that Iraq was dumping millions of barrels of oil into the Gulf from Kuwait in an apparent effort to frustrate U.S. landing efforts.

White House spokesman Madril Fitzwater said the amount is likely to surpass the 1989 oil spill at Valdez, Alaska.

"We will plan our military activities around it," he said.

Meanwhile, the toppled government of Kuwait Friday gave \$13.5 billion to the Gulf war effort. President George Bush said he "more determined than ever to bring this to a successful conclusion."

Mr. Fitzwater said that oil being emptied from Kuwaiti oil storage tanks threatens massive environmental damage.

"They are dumping huge quantities of oil into the Gulf from oil tank farms," Mr. Fitzwater said.

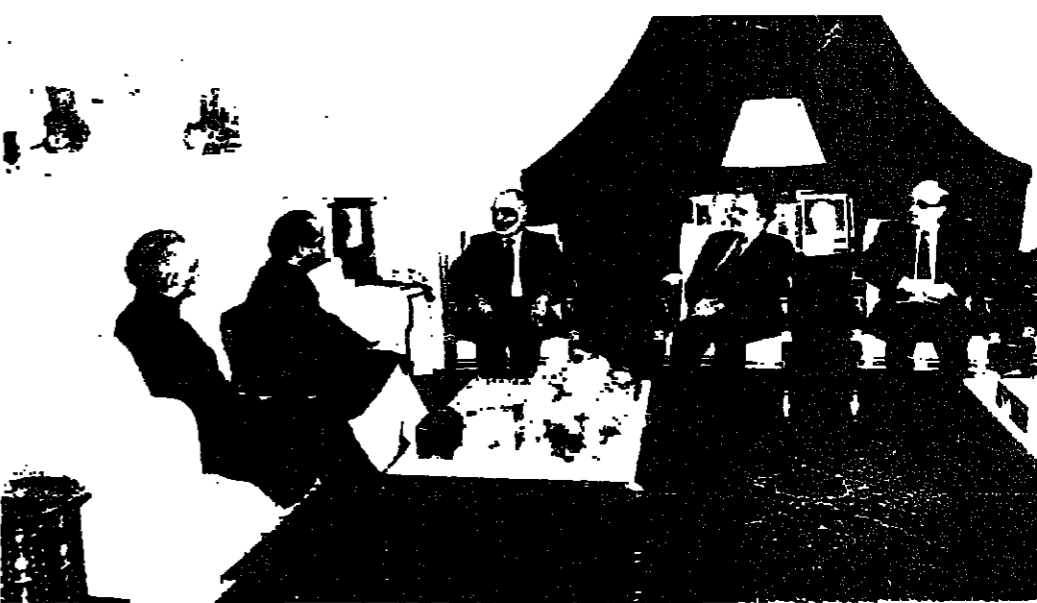
"It looks to be continuous. Clearly, it's in the millions of barrels."

In an apparent reference to the same oil slick, the United Nations Friday published a complaint by Baghdad saying U.S. warplanes bombed two Iraqi tankers Tuesday, "causing a vast oil slick in the Arabian Gulf which is bound to cause serious harm to the region's living marine resources and environment."

Mr. Fitzwater said the alleged Iraqi action to create an oil slick was apparently intended to hamper naval activity by the multinational force waging war on Iraq and "could well be the kind of disaster that would be beyond the accepted clean-up techniques."

Asked if the oil spill was comparable to the Exxon Valdez spill which dumped 11 million gallons (42 million litres) of crude oil into in Alaska's Prince William

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His Majesty King Hussein Friday holds talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaf Sharif (Petra photo)

King, Pakistani leader stress urgent need to end Gulf war

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaf Sharif Friday discussed the Gulf war and the pressing need to bring about an immediate end to the hostilities and make way for a peaceful resolution of the problem.

The King emphasised the need to end the fighting and give a chance for peaceful means to resolve the crisis and also warned of the consequences of the war, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The King Thursday contacted Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and discussed with them the latest developments in the Gulf war and the situation in the region.

Mr. Sharif, who arrived here Friday evening from Syria, briefed the King on Pakistan's view of the conflict and means to end the war through activating the role of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Petra said.

Following the talks, which were attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan,

Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Syrian Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri and the Pakistani ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Sharif told reporters that Pakistan supported the United Nations Security Council resolutions on the Gulf crisis but also wanted an end to the bloodshed in the Gulf. Mr. Sharif, who left for Cairo after a separate meeting with Mr. Badran, said earlier his country believed that an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait was the most essential component to an end of war, which began Jan. 17.

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Jaffa imam shot dead

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Masked gunmen shot dead the Muslim religious leader of Jaffa and his brother as they left Friday prayers, Israeli police said.

Iman Josef Al Shur and his brother Chaim were killed as they walked along a main street in the city bordering Tel Aviv, police chief Moshe Mizrahi said.

Israeli Radio reporters said previous attempts had been made on his life.

"Masked assailants, who apparently knew the route they usually take, hit him with automatic weapons and fatally shot them. They were dead on arrival at hospital," Mr. Mizrahi said.

In Tunis, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said Friday the Israeli curfew on Palestinians during the Gulf war violated the Geneva conventions.

"For the ninth day, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are denied their basic human

rights of sustaining themselves and their families," said Bassam Abu Sharif, an adviser to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"Basic needs of food and medicine are in great shortage because of the continuous 24-hour curfew imposed by the Israeli government," Mr. Abu Sharif told a news conference.

The United States and European countries have accused Iraq of violating the Geneva convention by deciding to hold captured allied airmen near potential bombing targets.

The PLO has broadly supported Iraq during the Gulf crisis. It accuses the West of double standards in rejecting Iraqi efforts to link a Gulf solution to an Arab-Israeli solution.

"It is very clear now that the aim of these forces is not the liberation of Kuwait as they claimed but the destruction of Iraq's military and economic force and infrastructure."

Rafsanjani resists calls to join war

Combined agency dispatches

DEFENDING HIS country's neutrality in the Gulf war, Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani said Friday that Iranians will not shed their blood for either Iraq or the United States.

Rebutting headline rivals who are pressuring him to join a holy war against the United States and Israel, Mr. Rafsanjani said it would be "suicidal" to back Iraq. "Why should we shed our blood? So that Iraq may stay in Kuwait? Or that the United States can become the victor?" he asked in his Friday sermon at Tehran University.

In the sermon Mr. Rafsanjani urged Iraq to leave Kuwait and foreign forces to leave the region. Worshippers shouted "death to America," "Death to Israel,"

and "Death to the Saudi clan." Mr. Rafsanjani said the current conflict "is a war of oil," waged by Washington in order to control the region's oil.

The other motive, he said, "is check the devoted revolutionary forces in the region, and to protect Israel."

Mr. Rafsanjani added that "the issue will not be resolved with Iraq's mere withdrawal from Kuwait, although the West claims that it will be."

Mr. Rafsanjani, a so-called pragmatist, wants to maintain Iran's middle line, and focus on rebuilding the economy, battered in the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

He said Iran's neutrality did not mean it had become complacent towards the Palestinian cause.

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Iraq dismisses allied claim of capturing island off Kuwait

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ DENIED Friday that the "infidel Americans" had liberated a tiny Kuwaiti island in the Gulf, saying Iraqi forces withdrew for their own unspecified military reasons.

Baghdad Radio also claimed Iraqi citizens captured a British airman shot down during an attack on residential areas. Iraqi TV aired interviews with four allied airmen earlier Friday, but the radio said Iraq has decided to temporarily stop such broadcasts.

The radio, citing the latest military communique, said Iraq had shot down 14 allied aircraft or missiles. It gave no further details. The allied command said Tuesday that Iraqi gunners knocked down one American and one British plane in the last 24 hours.

Kurdish rebels said Friday that their sources in Iraq claimed nearly 10,000 Iraqi troops have been killed or wounded by the heavy allied bombardment. Iraq's last communique on military casualties said 90 Iraqi troops had been killed in the first five days of the war.

Iraq also said enemy commanders were using the weather as an excuse for the failure of bombing raids and asked what they had achieved in thousands of air sorties.

It repeated that it was holding back its military might but would eventually strike.

"The blood of innocent people who were killed by the enemy bombardment will not go unavenged," Iraqi Radio said.

Military spokesmen in the U.S.-led alliance, which has flown 15,000 sorties against Iraqi targets, have said bad weather has hampered some operations.

The allied command said the U.S. navy Thursday seized tiny Qaarub Island, about 56

kilometres off Kuwait's southern coast, killing three Iraqis and taking 51 prisoners.

It claimed the island, about 100 metres wide and almost submerged at high tide, was the first Kuwait territory to be liberated.

Iraq said it withdrew its troops and boats from the island for "military considerations" and not because of "any alleged victory by those deprived of victory." It said many of the small islands off Kuwait are used as temporary listening posts.

"In a reckless attempt, the infidel, occupying aggressor Americans are trying to cover up the miscalculations which led them to perpetrate the crime of unsuccessful aggression and killing. Their reckless air raids... have not achieved their objectives and this has caused them to feel confused and at a loss," the radio said.

"Aimed a climate of frustration and miscalculation, the criminals came up with the idea of telling public opinion that they achieved victory with one helicopter which fired its shells from a distance in order to liberate a small rocky island in the Arab Gulf, the name of which is not known to the Iraqis," it added.

In the latest reported capture of an allied airman, Baghdad Radio said the British pilot was seized by "a number of citizens" in the Al Basra province and handed over to competent authorities. It did not give the date of the capture or identity of the airman.

The allied command announced the loss of a British Tornado ground-attack fighter bomber Thursday, the fifth Tornado lost in combat.

Baghdad Radio also ridiculed British Prime Minister John Major for advising members of parliament that they must accept losses in the Gulf.

"Did Mr. Major believe that he had sent his forces on a pleasure trip to the Arabian Gulf or that they would be conducting aerial acrobatics?"

"Major and other allies of the devils will regret their aggression," the radio said in a commentary.

The radio said nobody will be able to advise Mr. Major on how to receive the news of British losses because everyone "will be busy receiving the coffins of their dead."

Iraqi television showed what it said were residential neighbourhoods destroyed by allied bombings. The scenes included buildings with facades ripped off and roofs collapsed, piles of rubble in the street, and two wounded people carried away.

Cable News Network reporter Peter Arnett reported from Baghdad Friday that the allied bombers have severely damaged homes in an Iraqi town.

Arnett, one of only two Western journalists allowed to report from Iraq, said officials took him to Dour 160 kilometres north of the capital to see the effects of the raid.

He said he counted 23 grey brick homes destroyed. "They were flattened as though shaken by an earthquake."

Mr. Arnett said officials told him 24 civilians were killed by the bombing. They said there were no shelters in the town because it was not considered a likely target.

He said a weeping woman resident told him three brothers, their wives and eight children were among those killed. Townspeople told him there were no military targets in the area.

"I have no doubt there was definitely heavy bombing of this community," Arnett said. "There was no way this was a staged event."

Crown Prince: No peace initiative drawing attention

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Friday that no peace initiative to end the Gulf war was drawing international attention.

In an interview with the Thames Television, Prince Hassan said Jordan would defend itself if attacked by Israel.

"If the Israeli reaction (to Iraqi missile attacks) is intended to draw Jordan in, then clearly our reaction will be to defend ourselves," he said. "We have no reason to believe that that is the sole option, and, clearly, at the present time, with round-the-clock allied bombardment of Iraq in tens of thousands of bombs, there is no need other than the morale factor and the political symbolism of it," Prince Hassan said.

Prince Hassan said on Jordan's diplomatic role in reply to a question:

"I think at a given moment if that ever came it would be opportune and I think that this is our feeling over the last five months to have a country with an independent and objective role. It would put the old version a hypothetical that Jordan is interested in the humanitarian role and I was wondering even on the question of POWs whether there



was a role there for Jordan. "I am not suggesting anything here because no one has asked us. But clearly to have a middle ground position by Jordan could contribute if that was possible to hear new ones."

Asked whether there was any distinct peace initiative, Prince Hassan said: "At the moment

there are no political initiatives drawing international attention. The Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Algerians and the Non-Aligned (Movement) have all asked for a ceasefire; that is to say appealed to all sides to stop hostilities. But today the president of the U.S. has said there is no halt, and clearly the other side is equally determined to fight till the end."

Prince Hassan said Jordan would continue to suffer the results of the crisis. "We are already affected by the occupation and annexation of Kuwait, which we opposed, in terms of the increasing numbers of refugees. We are affected by the embargo and we hope effectively that the international community will help us maintain our credibility in the middle ground."

Petra reports from the U.N.: Jordan's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Abdullah Salah Friday informed the U.N. Security Council president of Jordan's support for a request by Yemen and the Arab Maghreb Union for a Security Council meeting to discuss the situation in the Gulf. The council was expected to hold a consultation late Friday to reach a decision on convening a meeting.

U.S. thinks of 'rebuilding bridges'

From Rania Atalla in Washington

ONCE THE Gulf war is over, the U.S. will emerge with greater influence in the Middle East although it is likely to find its interests at greater risk than ever before. That challenge, in the post-war period, would represent an opportunity for the U.S. to "reshape" the Middle East, define its role in the region and address indigenous grievances in the area. Such is the scenario envisioned by Congressman Lee Hamilton, chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East.

"We must begin to plan for peace in the Persian Gulf with the same intensity that we have prepared for war," Mr. Hamilton said at Washington's National Press Club Thursday. "We will certainly win the war. We must now begin to shape the peace."

Mr. Hamilton's projection represents one of a few attempts by an elected official in the U.S. to discuss the post-war situation that is expected to face American policymakers once the war in the Gulf comes to an end. Throughout the first week of war, the majority of media reports have focused on details of tactics and military strategies in the war against Iraq and have shunned discussing long-term political consequences of the war and the "allied" military campaign against Baghdad.

The congressman, a Democrat representing the state of Indiana, spelled out the military, political and economic consequences of the Gulf war and the role of the U.S. in the post-war Middle East. Politically, according to Mr. Hamilton, the U.S. will have to deal with two sets of issues — the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the divisions in the Arab World that could deepen the "rifts" between America, its Arab allies and the rest of the Arab World.

The challenge for the U.S. is to "reenergise" the peace process. "The Palestinians have to be given hope," Mr. Hamilton asserted. He outlined two possible approaches towards peace in the Middle East — Israeli-Palestinian talks and Israeli talks with Arab states. "These two approaches are not mutually exclusive. I think both should be pursued," he said.

Among the factors that could be seen as pressing for a settlement, Mr. Hamilton saw the increasing strength of Islamic fundamentalism, the shattered state of the economy in the West Bank and Gaza (due, in his opinion, to the intifada and the breakoff of funds from Gulf states), the reduced credibility (in the West) of Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and the division of the Palestinian community inside

and outside the occupied territories.

Hamilton said the election proposal put forth by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in May 1989 was "still on the table" and could provide a basis for "serious Israeli-Palestinian dialogue" that would open the territories to what he termed "normal" political activity.

The Indiana Democrat said he believed Soviet-American sponsorship of talks may be easier to hold than a Middle East peace conference. "I want to see direct talks between Israel and the Arab states, but for most Arab states such talks may have to occur in a broader, international framework," he said.

Mr. Hamilton said the U.S. will have to "rebuild" its bridges with Arab countries that had not supported the coalition against Iraq but had previously had good ties with the U.S. "We need to help heal wounds and avoid vindictive policies against those who remained neutral or supported Baghdad," Mr. Hamilton said in an apparent reference to Jordan and Yemen. "We need to ... help friendly states devise economic and political reforms."

On what he called gross economic inequalities in the Middle East, Mr. Hamilton said the U.S. should encourage, "perhaps even pressure," oil-rich Gulf states to share their wealth. "There will be no stability in the Arab World with-

out wealth redistribution," he said adding that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's "propaganda" — or his argument of "have vs. have-nots" — has had resonance in the Arab street.

The Indiana representative said that once the Gulf war is over, the U.S. should have more joint military exercises (especially naval and air exercises) and added that the U.S. will need to expand agreements with Gulf states in order to have "quick access" to naval and air facilities.

"The United States may also need a greater physical presence," including naval presence inside the Gulf, an extended task force of U.S. carrier battle groups and on-shore support that extends beyond the current U.S. facility in Bahrain.

Mr. Hamilton doubted whether the House of Representatives and public opinion in the U.S. would support the presence of ground forces in the region once the war is over. "My preference would be to use forces from the Gulf Cooperation Council, other Muslim countries, the Arab League or the United Nations," he said, adding that American forces should be small in number, off-shore and over-the-horizon.

Regional security arrangements need to be broadly based if they are to be sustained, according to Mr. Hamilton. "We do not want to

be the region's force," he said. "We should play a supportive role ... we should assist in building a stronger Gulf security system ... a tighter, more integrated Gulf Cooperation Council, with a boost from other key Arab states," he added in reference to Egypt.

Mr. Hamilton called for an international conference on weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The problem in the area, he said, was not only the military capability of Iraq but also that of Iran, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Israel — all of which have ballistic missiles and some of which have chemical weapons capabilities.

All parties, including Israel and Iran, must participate in the conference, Hamilton said. Otherwise, the conference would be a non-starter. "All weapons must be on the table ... Arab governments will not agree to restrictions on ballistic missiles and chemical weapons unless Israel agrees to comparable restrictions on its nuclear arsenal," he said.

Mr. Hamilton said Israel's restraint in its response to last week's Iraqi Scud missile attack was "commendable" and that U.S.-Israeli cooperation on the issue had overcome recent tensions between the two countries. "It cannot be easy for Israel to abandon its traditional policy of quick and heavy military retaliation," he said.

Security Council wants no Gulf action

UNITED NATIONS (R) — A majority of Security Council members want no action at the United Nations on the Gulf war until Iraq pulls its troops out of Kuwait, the president of the Council said Thursday.

But the members, at closed-door consultations on the progress of the war, put off any decision on whether to hold a public debate on the crisis as requested by five Maghreb countries, together with Sudan and Yemen.

All are trying to halt the fighting. But the United States and many other Council members are demanding that Iraq first declare its intention of withdrawing from Kuwait.

Algeria, speaking for the five Maghreb states, put Council members on the spot by insisting that every U.N. member had a right to hold a public meeting and the Council only needed to set the date of such a session.

"I believe we are here to prevent war — that is the role of the United Nations, that is the role of the Security Council — and we will continue to search for peace even if we are alone," said Algerian Ambassador Abdul Rahman Bensid.

None of the Maghreb states are supporters of Iraq, but all except Libya have been challenged by massive pro-Iraqi protests by Islamic fundamentalists.

Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzegeya of Zaire, this month's Council president, said he was to hold consultations Friday on the possibility of an open meeting.

But he emphasised to reporters that a majority of the Council members "do not believe that any further action should be taken until Iraq complies with Resolution 678."

The Security Council last year adopted 12 resolutions against Iraq, ending with Resolution 678 on Nov. 29 authorising force if Baghdad did not withdraw from Kuwait. The United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union are known to be opposed to any formal meeting on the war.

At issue is public exposure to speeches advocating a pause in the war to search for a peaceful solution, as well as questions on whether the heavy bombing of Iraq was legal under resolutions calling for the liberation of Kuwait.

Although there are enough Western nations and their allies on the Council to block a meeting, diplomats said the body might not be able to avoid an open session on the war forever.

The council has to meet before the end of the month to renew the mandates of some peacekeeping forces in the Middle East and it might be embarrassing to use procedural devices to cut down on the war, they said.

During Thursday's consultations, the United States, Britain and France reported on the actions being taken by their forces in the Gulf. Such reports are required under the Nov. 29 council resolution.

In an apparent answer to criticism that the heavy bombing of Iraq went beyond the purpose of the U.N. resolutions, British Ambassador David Hannay said, "I made it very clear that in those actions our sole objective is the liberation of Kuwait."

"It is no part of our objective to dismember or to destroy Iraq ... but when you are up against an occupying force of the size and complexity of the Iraqi armed forces, it involves military operations of a considerable scale," he added.

Hannay said the rules of action were designed to keep civilian casualties to a minimum and to "bring to the very careful attention of all those involved the sensitivity of Muslim holy places and cultural sites."

Whatever is happening to the intifada?

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Whatever happened to the intifada?

The Palestinian uprising against Israel, which has made television news headlines around the world over the past three years, has taken a back seat behind the Gulf war.

The international publicity which made Palestinians hope and Israelis wince has been swept from TV screens and newspapers by the allied onslaught against Iraq.

The Israeli government, for its part, has clamped the longest and strictest curfew of its 23-year occupation on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The curfew has paralysed the uprising and the army reports clashes have dropped by more than half.

Four barrages of Iraqi missiles since Friday have turned Israel's image from aggressor to victim, Palestinians say.

TV pictures of Israeli soldiers firing at rock-throwing youths have been replaced by footage of Tel Aviv residents being pulled from the debris of their homes after an Iraqi attack.

Such since and Israel's restraint in not retaliating against Iraq have proved a windfall for Israel's image in the United States and the Western countries backing Washington against Iraq.

The Palestinians have helped enhance that image by supporting the bogeyman of the popular Western press, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Virtually the only news reported from the occupied territories has been the shouts of triumph by Palestinians each time a Scud has crashed into Israel.

The longer Iraq withstands the pounding by U.S. and allied bombers, the more support for it among the Palestinian youths of the grim refugee camps and villages of the territories grows, Palestinian leaders say.

But they complain that their

support for Iraq has been distorted in the Western media, saying that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) never approved of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Palestinians backed only Iraq's attempt to link an Israeli withdrawal from Kuwait to an Israeli withdrawal from their lands, argues Ghassan Al Khatib, an academic and prominent Palestinian spokesman.

"Our people do not have sadistic feelings watching television (coverage) of the attack in Tel Aviv," Mr. Khatib said.

"The point is, in the feeling of the Palestinians, Israel and Tel Aviv is the source of all their troubles in the past 23 years ... if the enemy is hit it should make Palestinians happy."

In interviews numerous Palestinians said the TV pictures of Israeli homes hit by Scuds reminded them of Israeli air raids on Palestinians in southern Lebanon.

"Tel Aviv make us think of the damage done to Palestinian refugee camps in South Lebanon which were also civilian targets," Mr. Khatib said.

Such comparisons are likely to be lost on Western viewers and readers in the welter of favourable publicity surrounding Israel since the first Iraqi salvo last Friday.

The reaction of Palestinians in the street could also boost Israel's image in the west.

"Saddam's name will be written in golden letters in history," said Ahmad Abu Hussein, from Gaza. "He has fulfilled his promise by striking Israel unlike (late Egyptian leader) Gamel Abdul Nasser," he said.

The frustration of 23 years of occupation and nine straight days of being confined to her home by a curfew showed in Um Salim's cry on hearing of the raids.

"God is giving us revenge at last," shouted the 53-year-old Gaza resident.

CBS crew missing

DHAHRAN (AP) — Veteran CBS correspondent Bob Simon and three CBS colleagues covering the Gulf war were reported missing, and Saudi authorities said Friday the crew apparently headed into Kuwait.

The four have been missing since Monday, CBS spokesman Tom Goodman said in New York. He said a Saudi military patrol found their empty all-terrain vehicle along a road in a remote area of northern Saudi Arabia.

He identified those missing besides Simon as producer Peter Bluff, cameraman Roberto Alvarez, and soundman Juan Caldera.

Goodman said CBS was hoping the crew was with friendly forces in the area, "but we simply do not know at this time and we have no new information."

CBS has stepped up efforts to locate them and asked U.S. and Saudi military officials to share any information they might obtain, he said.

The Saudi Defence Ministry issued a statement early Friday saying the four men "apparently left their vehicle near the Saudi Arabian-Kuwait border and headed north into Kuwait."

"Expert Saudi trackers followed footprints from the Simon vehicle into Kuwait and north to the nearest Kuwaiti checkpoint manned by Iraqi forces. The trackers were unable to proceed further."

The ministry said when the car was found, it contained personal belongings, \$6,000 in cash, some

Israeli currency, television equipment and a wristwatch bearing the face of Saddam Hussein on its dial.

It said the CBS crew was on an "unsponsored and unescorted trip, a direct violation of established U.S.-Saudi combat media pool ground rules."

The ministry reminded all journalists now in the kingdom that travel into restricted areas without official escort or written permission is prohibited.

In New York late Thursday, Goodman said representatives of news organisations in Saudi Arabia have told CBS they will send any information they get about the missing journalists.

Goodman said, "beyond the fact that the tracks were found, at this point we're going to wait and find out what information is out there before commenting."

He refused to comment on whether CBS authorised the expedition or knew about it in advance.

He said he could not confirm any speculation that the crew entered Kuwait, saying "we do not know their whereabouts or their condition."

The four are among more than 700 print and broadcast journalists now in Saudi Arabia covering the war.

CBS last heard from them Monday morning, when they contacted the CBS bureau in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, he said. Their vehicle was found near the Kuwaiti border town of Al Ruj, he said.

Arab time bomb ticking away on France's doorstep

By Simon Haydon

Reuter

PARIS — France fears that North Africa, a time-bomb on its Mediterranean doorstep, could explode in the heat of the Gulf war, setting off an unpredictable clash between the Arab and Western worlds.

Tied to the French by colonial history, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia had hoped Paris could find a way to avert a war they feared would divide their loyalties as Arabs, as well as placing a huge strain on their intimate alliance with France.

But French diplomacy failed. With the conflict in its second week, the top priority for these governments now is survival, against a rising tide of Arab radicalism and Islamic fundamentalism fuelled by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

For France, much closer geographically and culturally to the Arab World than its Gulf allies the United States and Britain, the risks of upheaval in the Maghreb, Arab resentment in French cities and guerrilla infiltration are daunting.

"The authorities here are very worried because not only are the Maghreb countries just next door, they're also, through the immigrant community, inside our society as well," said Middle East analyst Bassma Kodmani-Darwish.

France, whose population is 56 million, is home to a Muslim

community numbering nearly five million, Europe's largest. The great majority are of North African origin.

The French legacy and language make France a natural haven for North Africans who might flee radicalism or fundamentalism in their countries. Mr. Kodmani-Darwish said there had been a marked increase in North Africans, mostly middle class men and women, leaving North Africa for France.

"The effects of the war are going to be felt very strongly within French society," she added in a telephone interview from her office at France's International Relations Institute.

Separated from their homeland by a day's sail or a two-hour flight, the North African community is France's second biggest religious group after Roman Catholics. Racial tension is never far beneath the surface.

In the immigrant suburbs of Paris, young Arabs proudly chant the Iraqi leader's name. Police this week seized hundreds of pro-Saddam cassettes.

Analysts predict an increase in racially-inspired crimes and success for France's far-right National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen in the event of heavy French war casualties.

The southern city of Marseille, entry port of most ships from North Africa, is under close scrutiny by police placed on maximum alert for attacks.

'Iraq is ready for suicide attacks'

MADRID (R) — The Spanish newspaper El Mundo reported from Baghdad Friday that Iraq's parliament, meeting in a secret underground bunker, had authorised air force pilots to carry out suicide attacks on U.S. aircraft carriers.

El Mundo journalist Alfonso Rojo sent the report overland to Jordan, where the Spanish embassy faxed it to Madrid. The paper said he was the only Western journalist left in Baghdad apart from Peter Arnett of the U.S. television network CNN.

Rojo's front-page story said unspecified Iraqi sources told him about the possible kamikaze-style attacks. "This would be a tremendous blow to (U.S. President George Bush's) morale," one Iraqi told him.

Publication of the report followed an apparent attempt by three Iraqi jets to launch a missile attack against allied warships in the Gulf.

Two were shot down by a Saudi fighter before coming in range of potential targets and the third fled. Rojo said Baghdad air defences were no longer sending up blanket fire each time attacking planes approached, but were firing only when they thought they could hit one.

News that Iraqi Scud missiles had hit Tel Aviv had sparked fears in the population of a "devastating" reprisal by Israeli armed forces, he said.

"The war will be long and the side which shows most stamina will win," an unnamed senior Iraqi official told him. "Here there is only one leader and the country has not collapsed."

El Mundo editor Pedro Ramirez said Rojo's good official contacts in Baghdad had enabled him to remain there after all other Western journalists, apart from CNN's Arnett, had been ordered to leave.

Rojo said he was staying in the city-centre Al Rashid hotel.

U.S. targetted Saddam in aborted bomb run — report

WASHINGTON (R) — A senior U.S. official said allied warplanes were despatched to kill Iraqi President Saddam Hussein one night last week but bad weather aborted the mission, the Washington Post reported Friday.

President Saddam, who reportedly travels mainly at night accompanied by decoys and a convoy of bodyguards, was pinpointed somewhere in central Iraq by allied intelligence officers, the unnamed official said.

But because of a storm front that moved through the area, "we didn't get to cross the target," the newspaper quoted the official as saying.

The reported effort to kill President Saddam raises anew the questions of what the goals of the U.S.-led alliance are — other than ejecting Iraqi forces from Kuwait — and whether such an operation violates a 1981 U.S. executive order banning assassinations of political figures.

A U.S. Defence Department spokesman had no comment on

Gulf-related violence and protests continue

JITTERS PERSISTED worldwide Friday as explosions in Greece rocked three local branches of U.S. and British banks and the French military attaché's home. In Malaysia, a homemade bomb was found near two airline offices.

There were no injuries in any of the incidents. A man claiming to speak for the leftist November 17 organisation telephoned an Athens newspaper following the blasts in Greece to say the bombings were a protest against the allied attack on Iraq.

The United States, Britain and France are active participants in the multinational military force battling Iraq in an effort to force it to withdraw from Kuwait. The caller also claimed responsibility for a fourth bomb found outside a U.S.-based Citibank branch in an Athens suburb. Police said the small homemade

time bomb exploded shortly afterwards, damaging part of the bank's facade.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for a bomb discovered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. But police said a blue nylon bag concealing the homemade device also contained literature condemning the U.S. role in the Gulf war.

The bomb was found near a Northwest Airlines office and a travel office representing American airlines. It was later detonated by police.

In Turkey, police used tear-gas and opened fire in the air to break up anti-war demonstrations in several cities Friday, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

Turkey, the only NATO nation bordering Iraq, has allowed use of its airbases by American warplanes to attack targets in northern Iraq.

EMBASSY OF INDIA, AMMAN REPUBLIC DAY

To mark the Republic Day of India, a flag hoisting ceremony will take place on Saturday, January 26, 1991 at 10:00 a.m. at the embassy of India, first circle, Jabal Amman. All Indians are cordially invited to attend the ceremony.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

05:09 Fajr
06:29 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:48 Dhuhr
14:43 'Asr
17:07 Maghreb
18:27 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellfah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771531

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be cold, cloudy and rainy at times. Snow is expected to fall in hilly areas. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy to cloudy and scattered rain is expected to fall.

Min./max. temp.
Amman 1 / 6
Aqaba 8 / 14
Desert 2 / 8
Jordan Valley 1 / 13

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 6, Aqaba 14. Humidity readings: Amman 95 per cent. Aqaba 64 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Issam Hammad 624830
Dr. Yousef Rashid 896391
Dr. Zain Zaghoul 638591
Dr. Sami Khouri 681373
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

DR. Zaid 'Ucidim (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

ZARQA:
Dr. Zaid 'Ucidim (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

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Refugees report civilians killed by U.S., allies bombing of Iraq

By Mariam M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Children, women and elderly people were among the first victims of the U.S.-led bombing raids on the northern Iraqi city of Karkuk, late last week, according to eyewitnesses arriving from Iraq into Jordan.

"I saw at least 12 children dead and wounded, after the air raids destroyed major parts of the city," said a 22-year-old Yemeni student who lived in the Iraq's oil-rich north and was in Karkuk at the time it was bombed.

The student, who said his name was not important, is currently staying at the Al Andalus refugee camp just outside Amman. He came to Jordan along with 300 other Yemenis. "All parts of the city were bombed. I would say the vast majority of the targets hit were civilian, non-strategic, non-industrial areas," he said.

While most of the Yemeni refugees said they were in Baghdad and, therefore, had no idea how other cities and towns in

Iraq were affected by the U.S.-led bombardment, all said that "many non-strategic sites had evidently been hit by the allied bombing of the capital."

"Very often we were inside the shelters when the attacks took place, but once outdoors we could see what had been destroyed," said Yemeni shopkeeper Mahmoud Areef. "Many places that were hit were really public service institutions. One such building housed a public library," he said.

According to the Yemeni eyewitnesses, Iraqi citizens in Baghdad were in good spirits and were "behaving stoically."

One of the Yemenis, who worked in a biscuit factory said the factory was hit and damaged during the bombings.

At least two Yemeni medical students who spoke to the Jordan Times said they were inside Iraqi hospitals after the Jan. 17 bombing of Baghdad and had seen several dozen casualties admitted to emergency wards.

"Most of the casualties were children," said Yasser Ahmad, a fourth year Yemeni medical student who visited the Yarmouk Hospital in Baghdad on Jan. 17. "I can testify that there were many, many civilian casualties, mostly children and old men," Ahmad said.

Most of the casualties suffered from head injuries and broken limbs, according to Ahmad, who says that he could not get an actual figure on the number of casualties when he asked hospital officials.

According to the Yemeni refugee from Karkuk, a girls' boarding house, which was being used mostly by female Sudanese students was flattened to the ground.

"There seems to have been injuries but as far as I could tell there were no deaths. The girls were in the shelters when the boarding house was hit," he said.

"It was very difficult to get food because the street where all the student restaurants were was completely destroyed," he added.

Turkish stand in Gulf denounced

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian-Turkish Friendship Society has denounced Turkey's biased attitude towards the western coalition against Iraq and described the Muslim country's stand as hostile and unjustified.

A statement issued in Amman said that the Turkish government has now transformed Turkey into a base for launching aggression on neighbouring Muslim Iraq, and called on the Turkish government to re-consider its position and join the efforts aimed at bringing about a peaceful settlement to the Gulf war.

A group of parliament members representing the Islamic movement in Jordan Thursday called on the Turkish embassy in Amman and delivered a memorandum to the ambassador addressed to Turkish President Turgut Ozal voicing the group's total condemnation of Turkey's present stand in the support of aggression on Iraq.

The memorandum said that the Muslims in the Arab World are angered and dismayed by Turkish government attitude and its decision to allow the U.S.-led forces to use Turkey's military and air bases for attacks and raids on neighbouring Iraq.

We the Islamic Movement in Jordan and in parliament are

seriously concerned over this hostile attitude of allowing American bombers to cause the destruction of a Muslim country and the killing of its innocent people, the memorandum said.

Turkey Thursday announced that it will retaliate if attacked by Iraq. The announcement followed a warning by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz who said that Turkey was taking an unjustified attitude towards Iraq and Ozal was subservient to the U.S.

In their memorandum, the Islamic group said the Turkish government should take steps to halt all aggressive acts emanating from its territory towards Iraq.

Muta University President Awad Khleifat issued an appeal to the Turkish government and people to stop aggression on Iraq. Iraq has no intention of attacking Turkey or the NATO alliance, and therefore there is no justification for Turkey allowing NATO planes to take off from Turkish territory and attack Iraq, said Khleifat, who was speaking on behalf of the university staff.

Khleifat appealed to Turkish universities and their staff to find a way to end their government's support for the U.S.-led forces in the Gulf, and to help end the war by peaceful means.

Right time for planting fruit trees, vegetables — ministry

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Agriculture is calling on Jordanian farmers and vegetable growers to start planting vegetables and fruit trees immediately since this is the right season of the year for such activity. Ministry of Agriculture's Secretary General Sami Sunna'a told the Jordan Times Friday that this was the season for planting fruit trees including olives and growing vegetables. He expressed hope that rainfall will continue to help a bumper harvest this year.

Asked about the rain that has fallen over the past four days, Sunna'a said that the rains were covering most of the Kingdom but the northern and western regions benefited more than others.

The rain is of particular importance for the pasture lands of Jordan which is turn is bound to benefit the livestock wealth of the country, Sunna'a added.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Wishah, secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) told the Jordan Times that the recent rains have started to replenish the almost dry reservoir behind the Wadi Shueib dam in the Jordan Valley. So far, the water collected behind the King Talal dam, the largest in the Kingdom, is nearly 7.5 million cubic metres, up from 6.4 million at the start of the current rainy season in Jordan.

The King Talal dam's overall capacity is 80 million cubic metres, and it is hoped that more rain will be falling so that the run off will be flowing towards the dams, he said.

Wishah noted that the JVA has now stopped pumping irrigation water rainfall. This process, he said, will help the dams to be replenished for the time being, not only from the saved water but also from the rain water that would be flowing into the wadis and into the dams. But the amounts of rain so far have not helped much the process of replenishing the reservoirs because in the first rainy days, the rain was not intense and because the soil was still dry, he added.

Wishah said that once the soil has been saturated, rain water will be running off the ground to the wadis and the reservoirs, or seeping underground to feed the aquifers. But Wishah said that the amount of water so far is far from being sufficient, but the rainy season is also far from being over.

Princess Basma inspects Aqaba emergency preparation

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, the chairperson of Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF), chaired a meeting Thursday for the emergency committee of the Aqaba Social Services Centre. The centre's role in the current situation prevailing in the region was discussed during the meeting.

Princess Basma expressed her profound appreciation of citizens' enthusiasm and readiness to carry out constructive work to enable the Kingdom surpass any emergency. Princess Basma pointed out the QAF had a basic role at the current stage. That role, she said, is represented in organising individuals in the society and directing them so that each accomplishes his or her role in providing the basic social services as well as spreading aware-

ness among citizens and training them on adapting to any situation.

Princess Basma affirmed that citizens in all parts of the Kingdom enjoy a sufficient degree of awareness and true feeling of belonging and of responsibility "all of which constitute the best means to counter any dangers threatening the country."

Princess Basma also visited the operations room of Aqaba Civil Defence Department where she was briefed by Aqaba district Governor Qasim Majali on the department's preparations for any emergency.

Majali said the city of Aqaba was divided into constituencies which were provided with first aid and rescue equipment and fire extinguishers.

"He said the awareness of the



HRH Princess Basma has helped the district overcome any difficulties in carrying out its plans.

Dr. Rosser continues hunger strike

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Ellen Rosser is an American peace activist who on Jan. 17 was on her way from Jerusalem to Iraq to the peace camp there. As soon as she heard of the Gulf war, she decided to go on a hunger strike in protest. The last meal she had was on the morning of Jan. 17. Since that time she has been sitting in front of the American embassy in Amman with a sign calling for the end of the war.

Dr. Nasri Khoury, neurosurgeon and director of the Palestine Hospital in Amman, learnt about Dr. Rosser from Jordan T.V. on Jan. 18 and went to meet her. Dr. Rosser had no friends or relatives in Jordan since her family lives in

the U.S. Dr. Rosser was staying alone in a small motel in Amman. Dr. Khoury invited her to stay at the Palestine Hospital so that she would have medical attention and care, the hospital said in a press release.

Dr. Rosser was admitted to the hospital on Jan. 21. She has undergone a full physical examination and was found to be in good health.

She has been informed of the dangers of a hunger strike but is determined to go on until the war is stopped. She takes nothing by mouth except water.

Yesterday Dr. Rosser completed her 8th day of hunger strike. She is feeling generally well but does not suffer from any major complications.

Shbeilat urges Iranian leadership to counter U.S.

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament member Leith Shbeilat Friday called on the Iranian Republic to counter American aggression on Iraq.

In a message he sent to the spiritual leader of the Iranian Islamic revolution Ali Khamene'i, Shbeilat said "the great Satan (the U.S.) and its allies of devils have occupied the holy places and have used them to launch an aggression on the Muslim people of Iraq."

Shbeilat warned Khamene'i that the U.S. next step will be to hit the Islamic revolution in Iran and to replace it with a secular regime by the use of force.

Muslims are still pinning great hopes on Iran and are still waiting Khamene'i's right decision represented in the announcement of Jihad (Islamic holy war) to stop aggression waged on Iraq and to end the occupation of the Islamic holy places in the Arabian peninsula, he said.

Shbeilat asked Khamene'i, addressing him as the one who describes the U.S. and Israel as the number one enemies of Islam, "is there a difference between the American aggression and the Israeli aggression?"



Leith Shbeilat

"The U.S. and Israel are two sides to the same coin... and today we feel the reality of Israel's taking part in the aggression on the Muslims," he said.

Copies of the message were sent by Shbeilat to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, chairman of the preservation of the constitution council Ayatollah Jannati, members of the council and speaker of the shura council Hujjatul Islam Mahdi Karubi.

King

(Continued from page 1)

"We want an end to the bloodshed of the innocent Muslims and I think the only answer lies in the war coming to an end," he told reporters in an arrival statement.

"That is only possible if Iraq pulled out its troops from Kuwait," he said.

Mr. Sharif, who has already visited Iran and Turkey in addition to Syria, indicated that he had no intention to withdraw the 11,000-strong Pakistani contingent in the American-led multinational forces arrayed against Iraq.

"These troops are not under American command," he asserted.

Mr. Sharif, whose mission seeking an end to the war is seen as mostly prompted by domestic pressure against the war and his country's military contribution to the multinational force, insisted that Islamabad remained to be a credible peacemaker.

"I don't think anything deters us from carrying out this role," he said. "I think it is a noble mission."

"There is a polarisation of feeling in the Islamic World, which is becoming very disturbed about this bloodshed," the prime minister said. "The Muslim World should play a role in ending it," he added.

'Zero movement' from Trebeil to Ruweished

By P.V. Vivekanand
with agency dispatches

AMMAN — The Iraqi-Jordanian border remained closed Friday for the third consecutive day, with officials reporting "zero movement" across the frontier post at Al Ruweished, 350 km north of Amman.

In Amman, senior officials said they expected the border closure to be a temporary measure. "I expect the flow to resume in the next two days," said a senior official. He did not elaborate.

Sources at the border said they had not been formally notified of the Iraqi move to close the entry point at Trebeil, 70 km from Al Ruweished — at midnight Tuesday for most evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait. Despite the closure, a few dozen people whose nationalities were not immediately known crossed Wednesday and Thursday.

In Amman, diplomatic missions of Asian countries were trying to get a clearer picture of the situation from Jordanian authorities.

At least two of the embassies here planned to send diplomats across the border from Al Ruweished through the no-

man's-land to ascertain whether any of their citizens were stranded in the area.

One Asian ambassador confirmed that he was informed that border officials at Trebeil were warning travellers that while they would be permitted into Iraq they would not be allowed to depart.

"We are sending one diplomat to the border today to find out what exactly is the situation," the ambassador told the Jordan Times. "If the diplomat is told at the Iraqi post that he can go in but can't leave then he will try to assess the situation at Trebeil," he said.

Travellers arriving Wednesday after clearing Trebeil before Tuesday midnight said between four and five thousand people were waiting at the border post. Very few details of the people's nationalities were available but it was believed that most of them were Egyptian and Sudanese.

A group of 116 Indian nurses was reported missing in Iraq, but presumably waiting to cross into Jordan.

In addition, several hundred Vietnamese, including a group of Vietnamese nurses, are also believed to be at Trebeil.

Several diplomatic missions in Baghdad have been maintaining wireless contacts with their respective governments, but some

of these contacts were lost over the past week, informed sources said.

Also missing in Baghdad was the Vietnamese ambassador to Iraq, one of the sources said.

"The ambassador was supposed to be travelling with the nurses from his country," said the source. "Suddenly, there is no information of his whereabouts," the source added.

Help offered

France, Japan and Argentina have made planes available to help evacuate refugees from the Gulf war and provide relief supplies, aid officials said.

Refugees had not yet poured out at the rate for which preparations had been made, but there were still several thousand, primarily in Jordan, who wanted to leave.

France had told the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) it would, if necessary, provide a plane capable of evacuating 7,000 to 10,000 refugees in a series of runs, an IOM spokeswoman told a news conference in Geneva.

She said Japan had provided four commercial Boeing 747s to carry a total of 1,000 Asian refugees in Jordan, primarily from Vietnam but also the Philippines. Two flights had been

tentatively scheduled for Sunday.

In Tokyo, defence officials said Japanese air force transport planes would be ready to fly to Cairo in about 10 days to pick up Asian refugees.

The Turbo-prop C-130 Hercules would shuttle stranded Vietnamese, Filipinos and other Asians from either Damascus or Amman to Cairo where they would board commercial planes for onward flights, said Shigeru Hatakeyama, head of the Defence Agency's defence policy bureau.

The United Nations' Disaster Relief Organisation (UNDRP) said Thursday that as many as 80,000 war refugees from Iraq may be converging on Iran.

Most of the arrivals are expected at the border crossing-point of Shalamcheh.

Iran, which frequently cites its fears of a potential deluge of refugees in its appeals for a halt in the war, has the capacity to deal with about 100,000 people, according to relief agency officials.

According to an Iranian official in Tehran, 1,000 refugees had crossed the border by Wednesday since the bombing began Jan. 17 but predicted the number could swell to 200,000. He said the refugees were expatriates and did not include Iraqi or Kuwaiti nationals.

Demonstrators march in Amman, Baqa'a against U.S.-led war on Iraq

Abdullah Hasanat in Amman & Mariam M. Shabin in Baqa'a

ABOUT 200 young people, shouting slogans of support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and urging him to strike at Tel Aviv, headed for the U.S. embassy after Friday prayers yesterday. Half an hour later and less than a kilometre from the Al Hussein mosque in downtown Amman, where the march originated, an equal number of police officers persuaded the marchers to reverse course.

The police force, composed of officers in constant contact with their headquarters through walkie-talkies, plainclothes policemen with notebooks, and uniformed policemen with wooden clubs, escorted the protesters from the minute they gathered immediately after worshippers left the mosque.

At the centre of the city the police attempted to divert the march away from the Wadi Seer street that leads to Jabal Amman, and both the Iraqi and U.S. embassies, towards Salt road leading to the Abdali bus terminal. But the marchers pushed their way through shouting "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar."

At the foot of Jabal Amman climb, a bearded demonstrator argued that the Americans were responsible for the war against Iraq and for the death of Palestinian children in the West Bank and Gaza. The police officer in charge shouted that while the people of Jordan were fully behind Iraq there was no reason for anyone to do harm to any foreigner or foreign mission since "Iraq itself did not close nor attack the American embassy" in Baghdad.

After some more haggling with the police, the demonstrator, accompanied by the police, journalists and TV crews and photographers headed back towards Al Hussein Mosque and there dispersed.

In the Baqa'a refugee camp, some 800 demonstrators took part in a march protesting the American-led war against Iraq.

Demonstrators chanted pro-Iraq, anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans.

Most of the marchers appeared to be followers of the relatively small Islamic Jihad (Beit Al Maqdes) group led by Sheikh Assad Bayyoud Al Tamimi who lives in Amman.

Baqa'a's camp is the poorest and largest of all Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan. It has a population of approximately 120,000 people, most of which are supporters of the various factions of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), as well as the Gaza-based Palestinian Resistance Movement, Hamas. While many camp onlookers shouted pro-PLO slogans, no PLO supporters were evident in Friday's rally.

The demonstration was an apparent effort to get media attention, since the group had invited more than 30 television, radio and print journalists to attend the event. During his Friday sermon at Imam Ali Mosque in the centre of the camp Tamimi asked participants in the march to be cordial to the invited journalists.

Calls for holy war and attacks on Israel as well as verbal mocking of the governments of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United States characterised the rally.

While demonstrators marched down the narrow, muddy roads of the camp, built after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, many waved anti-Western placards denouncing the United States for its violent policies in the Gulf in particular and the Middle East in general.

While there have been continued

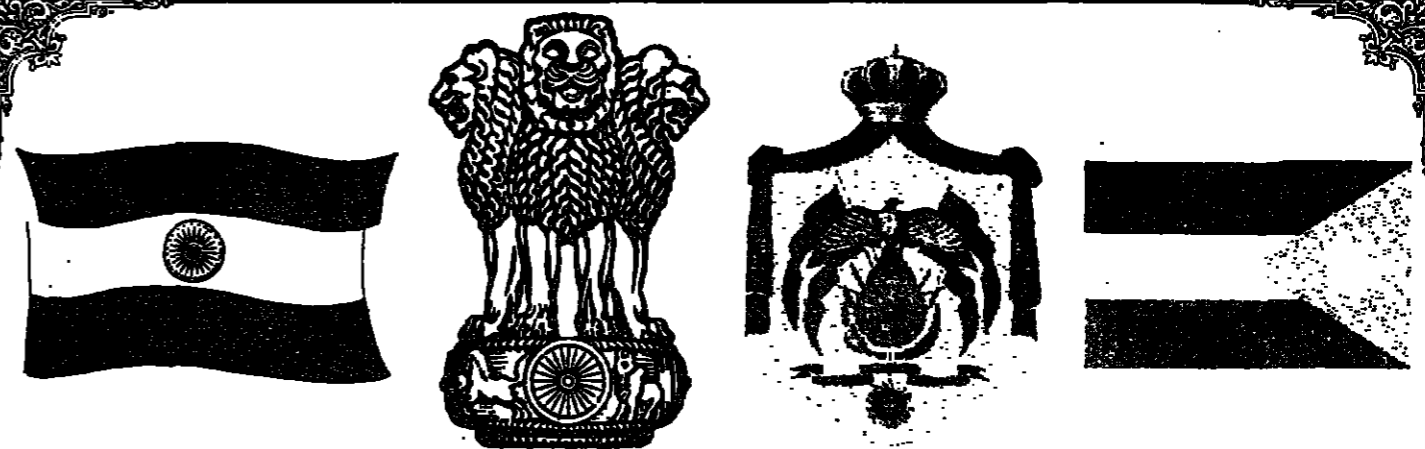
calls for a holy war against the Americans and the Israelis by Islamic groups in Jordan, none of the demonstrators who spoke to the Jordan Times Friday said that the Kingdom should begin such a war.

Phrases like "If we were attacked we will defend ourselves," and "If it must be war then let it be," seemed to convey the message that while supporting Iraq in its war against foreign aggression, Jordanians and Palestinians are not willing to enter an armed conflict unless they were forced to do so.



"We will fight if we are attacked," said a 24-year-old Palestinian demonstrator named Tayseer.

The mosque preacher called on members of the Lower House of Parliament to press for arming the population in preparation for a holy war. Many Jordanians, however, feel that arming the whole population may not be necessary since many citizens are already members of the People's Army or are serving in the country's armed forces.

"We are against injustice, and we are the victims of a thousand injustices and if there is no peaceful solution we are willing to fight for our rights," one participant in Friday's rally summed it up.



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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Victims of own folly

SOVIET leader Mikhail Gorbachev is having a taste of the so-called "new international order" that he colluded with U.S. President George Bush to introduce to the world. Now Moscow is served with notice by Washington to stop reestablishing law and order in the Soviet Union or risk ostracism by the West and lose all. So what had started to be a good sounding phenomenon is fast evolving into the exercise of Western tyranny against any nation of the world that dares to differ with it. This bitter medicine that the USSR has now got to take was its own making. It aided and abetted its prescription and administration and once the genie is out of the bottle, there is no telling where its consequences are going to end. Today it is Iraq, tomorrow the Soviet Union, next maybe China or every other nation that sees things with different binoculars from Washington's. This deterioration in the international rules of the game that served mankind reasonably well thus far is being preempted by a new order that is nothing but a renewal of the old Western hegemony. The concerned nations of the world should move fast to put the reigns on President Bush before he gets carried away with the concentration of so much power in his hands and the hands of other like-minded regimes. There can never be a genuine new international order under circumstances where a certain block of nations exercise monopolistic powers. The security of the world can best be promoted by a system of checks and balances exercised by a number of blocks of powers. A safe and secure world needs a democratic system of pluralism. Otherwise there will be plenty of opportunities for an abuse of power by Washington and its allies. Moscow, Peking, New Delhi and other capitals would be kidding themselves if they thought that Iraq is the first and last place where Western hegemony is exercised. They will be next in line unless they regroup and hold fast.



ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i daily Friday called on London, Washington and Paris to re-examine their positions and their calculations in the light of the losses they sustained as a result of their air raids on Iraq. The paper said that military commanders in these three capitals have been admitting that the war could take months after they had thought that it would end in a matter of hours or days. President Bush has realised now that the Gulf war is no where similar to the Vietnam conflict, and he is confronted now with the flood of American people demonstrating against the war on Iraq, the paper noted. For France, it said, the real losses have not yet begun; and once the ground battles are waged, it is quite possible that the French realise the grave blunder they had committed. The paper reminded the British government that by the time war is over, no more Gulf funds will be flowing into the coffers of British banks because the Gulf countries will be bankrupt if not destroyed. The paper reminded the invaders of the huge losses predicted in the coming ground battles and said these countries involved in the aggression on Iraq would do well to re-examine the situation and pull out from the quagmire as soon as possible.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily focuses attention on two extremist Zionist leaders, Sharon and Eitan, who had commanded the Israeli armed forces in the previous wars with Arabs. Mahmoud Al Kayed, who is also the newspaper's chief editor, says that since the outbreak of the Gulf conflict, these two have been missing from the political and military scene in Israel; and since they are regarded as experts in conflicts involving armour, they are thought by observers to be in Saudi Arabia now helping the U.S.-led forces in the coming confrontation with the Iraqi armoured divisions. Kayed says that Eitan and Sharon both took part in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, gaining wide experience in fighting against the Arabs, and therefore they are most probably now offering this experience as a gift to the U.S.-led forces in the Gulf. There is no difference for the Arabs in general and the Iraqis in particular between the Americans and the Israelis; and the presence of these two commanders in Saudi Arabia is not a novelty since the Zionists are strategic allies of the United States, and are actually involved in the coalition against Iraq, the writer adds. He says one can expect the worse to come from the number one enemy of the Arab World.

View From Amman

ON Jan. 16, 1991 President Bush spoke again of a new world order. Had he spoken of this at any other time, his words would have been met with jubilation if for not other reason than the promise the words themselves contained. This, after all, was the leader of the United States of America; mighty not only militarily, but a country that spoke of law, order, and principles of humanity and justice. People recall that he received only a minority of the Jewish vote of America when he was elected and that his Republican Party in the last November elections also received only a small percentage of that Jewish vote. Yet he too, like every president of the United States since Eisenhower succumbed to the Zionist pressure. And thus, when his words reached our region, they too rang hollow and empty.

It was after he gave orders to attack Iraq that he declared, on Jan. 16, that he was "at peace with himself." Almost a week later his Chief of Staff Colin Powell declared that the so-called "allied" army's strategy was to cut the Iraqi army off "then kill it." At the same time that this was being said, Western analysts were wondering how and who could assassinate Saddam Hussein, how to topple him, and whether Iraq will be "carved up." Will a state of Kurdistan be created? How best to reduce Iraq and turn it to dust?

It is in this eerie science fiction atmosphere that the words of President Bush, who pledged his voters a "gentler and kinder" America, should be analysed. What happened to President Bush? Indeed what happened to the entire Western world so that only hatred and venom is spewing out? Why this fantastic and deep

The war by proxy

hatred of Iraq? Who stands behind this latest campaign of myth information, disinformation, racial anti-Arab, anti-Semitic sentiment against the Arabs disguised in Saddam hatred and this Saddam mania?

For us Arabs, the promise of this new world order is not only frightening but worse still has become a nightmare reality. And while Iraq should have withdrawn from Kuwait, we wonder whether what is currently going on, and what is contemplated, is equal to the deed. For whose benefit are the American, British and other "allied" forces fighting? As important as Kuwait is, in the final analysis it is but a side-show, a distraction to cover up the real conflict over Palestine. The fighting, to be sure, in on the Saudi-Kuwaiti-Iraqi borders, and those "allied" troops are fighting Iraqis, but the reality is that this is yet another Arab-Israeli battle fought by proxy, by others, on behalf of Israel.

How was the battle staged so far away from Palestine in a question that historians will contemplate for a long time to come. The sequence of events, however, before the crisis as well as after Aug. 2, when Iraq occupied Kuwait, and especially after that date indicates a Western intent not only to "liberate" Kuwait and ostensibly protect Saudi Arabia — which nobody in his right mind ever believed was threatened anyway — but to reduce Iraqi power as well again: why?

Iraqi power is certainly not a threat to Britain, France or the United States; never was, nor is it now. Then it is on the regional level that we have to search for answers. And it is here that the

Israeli connection becomes clear. What with two million Soviet Jews arriving in Israel soon, that country, too, like Nazi Germany before it, needs space and thus the *Drang nach Osten*, the drive to the East.

And, yet, however, the results of this Zionist-Western trap may unfold, one thing remains certain: that the Arabs will continue fighting and the war which commenced with the battle of 1967 through those of 1967, 1973 and 1982 will continue, of this the West and the Zionists must be sure and along these lines they must lay down their future strategy. The future, should the Zionised West continue in its present course of attempting to humiliate and reduce the Arabs, will be but a continuation of the present.

The Palestine problem should be addressed justly. Nothing short of that would cause us to lay down our arms. The West must understand that not now, not ever, will an Arab leader agree to the "eternal" loss of Palestine and the Holy City of Jerusalem.

This crisis too shall pass, but one way or another the struggle will continue until a modicum of justice that the West allowed itself to accept is at hand. It is horribly sad that the West allowed itself to become the killing machine of the Shamirs, Levys and the Sharons of Israel. Even these, in their blind rage at a world that treated them inhumanly can be understood: their skin still tattooed and their breath asthmatic from the gas of Western ovens. But what of a Mr. Bush, a Mr. Major, a Monsieur Mitterrand... etc! These certainly know or should know what they are doing.

Point of no return

By Issa M. Dallal

WAR is the ultimate. It is the point of no return. It is because of this and the tragic results of war, that the United Nations Organisation was set up specifically for the purpose of promoting peace and security. Indeed the first and main purpose of the U.N. was clearly and explicitly spelled out in article one of the charter "to maintain international peace and security"; not to resort to armed conflicts; and "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

In line with these noble ideals, Paragraph (1) of Article (33) of the charter provided as follows:

"The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, seek a solution by negotiation, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice."

Paragraph (1) of the said article was supplemented by Paragraph (2) in the following terminology. "The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means."

It is thus abundantly clear that this article commensurates at least seven courses of action which must be exhausted to the

full before other means — such as armed conflict or the use of force — can be resorted to.

The question which then poses itself is this: considering that the U.S. is the leader of the so-called free world; considering that it is at present the unchallenged superpower on this earth, and that, therefore, it obviously should shoulder its national and international responsibilities accordingly, the question is: has the U.S. discharged its responsibilities according to the spirit and text of the U.N. Charter? Or has it, conversely, chosen to play the part of the "cowboy" or even worse "the ugly American," which one would have liked to forget about.

It is accepted in public international law that "the simple means of settling state differences, and that to which states as a rule resort before they make use of other means is negotiation." Obviously negotiation is, by its very nature, a long process and not confined to a few hours of discussion; and equally obviously, it must be carried out in good faith. While negotiations may not always be very fruitful, generally speaking one of the effects of negotiations may be compromise. Hence, one is bound to ask in this context whether the few hours of short discussions which took place between the foreign ministers of the USA and Iraq on the Jan. 9 1991 in Geneva

were sufficient. And the other part is whether they were carried out in good faith in order to reach an acceptable and reasonable compromise. Or were they merely a face-saving device on the part of the U.S. administration — when all along and from the very onset President Bush declared, and most persistently, that there will be no compromise with Saddam Hussein (without even having the courtesy of giving him his right title "President Saddam Hussein")?

I maintain, that in the context of the events and the various declarations made by the U.S. administration, and its belligerent tone and attitude there was little chance of success of these so-called "discussions" if any. For they were in effect no more than a face-to-face declaration by the U.S. administration of its various previous warnings and threats.

And thus they were not conducive to peace in any way; in fact, exactly the converse: Real and earnest dialogue was apparently never intended on the part of the U.S. administration. History alone will be the arbiter of the U.S. attitude on this most serious matter and its damaging effects on the generations to come.

The author of the above article is a lawyer in Amman. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Missiles

(Continued from page 1)

to face bitterness," Baghdad Radio said.

"The coming days will witness more of Iraq's power and hidden reserves which will be uncovered through action rather than talking," said a commentary broadcast by Baghdad Radio.

The Israeli army chief said Iraq should not strike back immediately for Friday's attack. Israeli and U.S. air defence crews shot down several of the seven Iraqi rockets with Patriot missiles, the army said. It said most of the wounded were lightly hurt.

One residential area was devastated by a blast. People wandered in shock through streets littered with broken shutters and glass.

Hundreds of rescuers in gas masks sifted through the rubble with sniffer dogs checking for survivors. Censors will not allow exact locations to be given for security reasons.

"Seven missiles were fired today, according to our estimation," said army Chief Lieutenant-General Dan Shomron.

"I suppose that most of the missiles were hit by the Patriots, but as we know fragments fell, in some cases the warhead fell. It's hard to tell exactly what was damaged," he told Israel Television.

"There is no doubt that we have the ability for quick and severe retaliation," Shomron said.

"But as long as the civilian population can truly endure as it has until now — and I very much appreciate this ability — it will allow flexible decision-making at the political level between what is urgent, immediate and painful, and between what is important for the long term which will influence the whole Middle East."

Iraq has so far not carried out its threat to attack with chemical

weapons. All 20 missiles fired at Israel in five salvos have had high-explosive warheads.

Explosions thundered in the sky over the densely-populated coastal plain of central Israel as the Patriots shot up.

Flaming fragments dropped to the earth amid a rain storm.

The streets of Tel Aviv, Israel's largest metropolitan area and one of Iraq's chief targets of the Gulf war, were virtually deserted on the Jewish Sabbath which begins on Friday evening.

Cable News Network (CNN) showed a rocket roaring low over a Tel Aviv street and crashing behind a building while panicking people screamed.

Window shutters were ripped off houses for 500 metres along one street.

Israel's 4.75 million people were ordered to don gas masks and enter sealed rooms when air raid sirens sounded shortly after 6 p.m. (1600 GMT).

The all-clear came 40 minutes later but Israelis were instructed not to leave their homes.

The latest attack seemed sure to reopen debate over how long the Jewish state could stay its hand. It has already made clear retaliation will come eventually.

Washington rushed Patriot missile batteries and their crews to Israel to defend it from the Scuds.

Germany, which on Thursday gave Israel \$165 million in aid, sent Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher for talks. Among the topics was the supply of further Patriots from Bonn.

Mr. Genscher left the Jewish state shortly before the Scud attack.

The European Community (EC) told Israel Friday it would lift all restrictions on scientific and trade cooperation imposed a year ago after Israel closed universities in the occupied West Bank, the Israeli foreign ministry said.

"The EC will at once resume its discussions on Israel's alignment with the community to

wards European unification in 1992," a ministry spokesman said.

Cooperation on 27 scientific projects with Europe would also resume.

"The adoption of this decision is an expression of the community's appreciation of and understanding for Israel's position and in view of Iraq's aggression against her," the spokesman said.

In Damascus, Syria's foreign minister Friday criticised Iraq's tactics in the Gulf war but said Israel should not retaliate for Iraqi missile attacks against it.

Oil slick

(Continued from page 1)

Sound, the White House official replied: "It's a good likelihood it will be several times larger than that."

The Exxon Valdez tanker ran onto beach reef on March 24, 1989, causing the largest oil spill in U.S. history. The spill fouled hundreds of kilometres of shoreline and killed huge numbers of birds and other wildlife.

A Saudi Arabian military spokesman said there was probably a military reason for the slick.

"They are allowing it to spread," Commander Abdul Al Amadi told reporters. "There must be some strategy behind it."

But he said he doubted the reason was for Iraq to be able to set the oil on fire to block any allied invasion because the oil would be hard to set alight.

Major General Robert Johnston, chief of staff of U.S. forces in the Gulf, agreed the oil would be hard to set afire.

But he said if the U.S.-led coalition forces did launch an amphibious assault on Kuwait and Iraq set the oil on fire it would be only one more problem for the allies to handle.

"We can work around it," he said.

The Saudi commander told reporters the slick was about 15 kilometres long and had been flowing for about three days.

The wars ...after the war

By Dr. A.R. Malhas

IT is surprising to watch the United States determined to send its men and women to a bloody battle field, very far away from home, at a time when its psyche has hardly been cured from the Vietnam syndrome.

It is also astonishing to see the United States choosing the war option for solving a Middle East problem, such as the present one in the Gulf, especially after its recent experience in Lebanon. It is even harder to believe that all this is happening at a time when the United States is advertising a new world order characterised by the absence of wars, cold and hot.

I am sure the United States realises the fact that wars in general, and the ones in the Middle East in particular, can be very messy affairs. To avoid such a mess in the Gulf war, the psychology and military advisers of the Bush administration argued that a swift and decisive action would keep things tidy and under control. They also thought that surgical treatment of the Gulf crisis was all that was needed to abort awakening of the dormant Vietnam complex. They must have assumed that twenty thousand incoming American coffins over a period of two weeks would be less nostalgic of Vietnam than the same number coming in over a

period of six months. This is a theory that has yet to be proven!

No doubt surgery is a neat and tidy medical discipline, but it is not without complications. Surgeons often end up with messy and prolonged post-operative complications despite taking all possible precautions before surgery to ensure a neat and clean result. Some of these complications, we are reminded, are worse than the disease itself.

Bush advisers believe that the Vietnam syndrome can be evoked by either the high number, or the high frequency by which coffins return to the United States. This is true. However, the half-asleep Vietnam complex is so responsive to other stimuli that any war can easily revive it, irrespective of the number of its casualties. This is more so if the war is avoidable, very expensive, without a convincing purpose, and against an enemy who, until yesterday, was a friend. Whether the United States wins or loses the Gulf war, it is certainly cultivating a good number of angry enemies on the way. At home, the Bush administration will have to fight two major battles. One against the neo-Vietnam complex with all its new ramifications, and the other with the American taxpayers who will demand a good explanation why he was made to pay so

much for so little.

The real wars of the United States, however, will be on the international arena. If Americans stay in the Gulf, they will have to face a cultural war that cannot be ignored. Islamic fundamentalist movements will become more active, more widespread, more serious and more united against the United States. The Arab peoples, who are already pregnant with hatred to the United States, will deliver painful strokes to American interests all over the world. The United States will have to battle dazzling international terrorism. Not only the American way of life will change, but the way they dress up. Protective chest vests may become standard American underwear!

A war that was supposedly started to finalise an old world order and start a better one will end up with a world that has a policeman, but no order at all. The United States, which hoped to put a surgical end to this war, will find itself living with the complications of its surgery: Multiple and chronic wars. However, one thing is certain: Unless the United States changes its role from a world policeman to an impartial world leader, the United States, which is dealing with one Saddam now, will find itself dealing with millions of Saddams later on!

Iraqi warplanes tough nuts to crack — or even find

By Giles Elgood
Reuters

LONDON — Why are the allied warplanes criss-crossing Iraq with near impunity finding it so difficult to destroy the Iraqi air force, despite their high-tech weapons and enormous firepower?

The allies say they have air superiority — but this appears to have been achieved at least in part because Iraqi fighters have so far declined to fly against them.

Defence analysts say Iraq is using the tactics it learned in its eight-year war with Iran — preparing for a defensive land battle with troops dug-in behind massive desert fortifications.

The warplanes, meanwhile, have been hidden in hardened shelters in the north of the country and defence analysts believe President Saddam Hussein may be conserving them for later in the conflict.

The allies flew more than 8,000 sorties in the first five days of the war. But military sources in London said only 30 Iraqi combat aircraft of a total of 800 were known to have been destroyed.

Most of Iraq's approximately 40 military airbases are still able to operate, and some combat aircraft flew to dispersal fields and converted highways.

While allied bombers were able to put airfields out of action in initial raids, runways have since been cleared and aircraft protected.

Some airfields have had to be bombed more than once.

Even if runways are hit by cratering bombs, aircraft with reduced payloads can take off from shortened runways.

Military sources said some Iraqi military airfields were so large that it was unrealistic to hope to knock them out completely. Some were the size of London's Heathrow airport.

Despite the bombing, sources added, Iraq was still able to produce and store chemical weapons and might yet deploy biological weapons, military sources said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

And despite some success in finding and destroying Scud missile launchers, Iraq can still fire them. Fewer than half the mobile launchers had been destroyed, the sources added.

The allies have been Scud-hunting on a grand scale since some of the Soviet-designed, Iraqi-improved missiles hit Israel last week. Britain has thrown its advanced, all-weather Tornado GR1A reconnaissance aircraft into the search.

Mobile launchers move around in large areas and, even if detected when they fire their missiles, they can be gone by the time allied bombers appear.

Iraq bought up to 1,700 Scud missiles from the Soviet Union, by the end of the war with Iran that figure was thought to be about 1,000.

Now, allowing for cannibal-

isation of basic Scuds to produce long-range variants, and for testing and training, Iraq is still thought to have more than 500. So far in this war its known firings have not exceeded 50.

The British defence minister has said publicly that allied planes may be dropping some of their bombs on decoys.

Armed Forces Minister Archie Hamilton said: "The actuality may be that when we thought we were taking out a Scud launcher this was actually something made of cardboard and plywood..."

In Amman, a Jordanian security source said Iraq had deployed plastic dummy missiles and machines to emit decoy radar signals at bases used to fire Scuds towards Israel.

Bob Hutchinson, of the authoritative journal Jane's Defence Weekly, said Iraq's command and control system appeared to be better protected than had been thought.

In this field too, he said, the Iraqis would have erected dummy facilities to confuse bombers and there would be back-up communications systems and headquarters.

Military sources said, however, that damage had been inflicted on main communications and the Iraqis were now using less secure methods to transmit orders.

To complicate matters further, for the past two days, the allied bombardment has reportedly been hampered by bad weather.

Truth, disinformation and propaganda converge to form the war of information

Desert changes from shield to storm depending on the whims of the Americans

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — January 17, at 1:30 a.m. American, British, Kuwaiti and Saudi air forces started massive air raids on the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, and other cities and locations. The world stood still as close to 18,000 tonnes of bombs rocked the city. In the next two days, the amount of explosives dropped on Iraq and Kuwait far exceeded to power of the U.S. atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, as His Majesty King Hussein pointed out at a press conference on Saturday. This all happened against a country that has been denied medicine and food for the last five and a half months, the King said.

This mad, brutal war that erupted nine days ago has been called by the Americans the war for the "liberation of Kuwait," while the Iraqis on the other hand have preferred to call it the "mother of all battles." But whatever the name one chooses to call it by, there remain a

number of contradictions that not only belie its true aims and objectives but also cloud the conduct of the war itself.

The following are some of the most vivid and well remembered examples, prior to the start of war:

— According to the United States, the troops were employed in the Gulf in order to protect the Saudi kingdom from any further "aggression" by Iraqi "dictator" Saddam Hussein. Then the objectives suddenly changed. The war, as we have seen, was declared in the name of liberating Kuwait and reinstating the Al Sabbah family. The defence of Saudi Arabia never again figured in the equation.

— In the run-up to the battle, the U.S. and its allies first insisted that their aim was not to destroy Iraq or to topple its government, but only to liberate Kuwait. As it turned out, the amount of explosives that was dropped on Iraq, and the severity and scope of the aerial and missile attacks, showed that no less than Iraq's total military power and its industrial and

technological infrastructure were the targets.

— While the United States was insisting that it was seeking a political and diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was touring world capitals in an effort to enlist their support in passing a United Nations resolution that would apparently be used to exert more pressure on Iraq to pull out of Kuwait. In actuality though, this resolution was meant not as pressure tactics, as some Europeans and others had naively believed, but as a United Nations legitimised base for waging the war against Iraq.

— It would be "no Vietnam", American President George Bush assured his people at the start of the military action against Iraq. The public was also promised that this war would be a short and concise war. His words are yet to stand the test of time (even though they sound a little unthoughtful and untrue already) as there are different indications from American officials, including Defence Secretary Dick Cheney

and commander of U.S. troops in the Gulf General Norman Schwarzkopf, that the fighting would continue for a "considerable (period of) time" and that it would not be a "Panama."

— Media reports had been referring to the impending war as one between Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the rest of the world, forgetting that close to 18 million Iraqi people would be involved in it directly. "... It is strange that this crisis is dealt with as if it is between one person (Saddam Hussein) and a group of nations," King Hussein was saying at his press conference last Saturday. "We are talking about 17 or 18 million people here. Let us hope that all people regard others with the same equality when it comes to dealing with human lives and rights..." he continued.

As it turned out, the King was right all the way. The war is raging between the whole of Iraq, people and army, and the U.S.-led alliance, and it is not just Saddam against the whole world. These contradictions in American policies, aims, state-

ments and postures are not all the examples that can be cited for the pre-war era. More, however, are easily available for the first six days of the hostilities that are taking place in the region.

— First U.S. reports regarding the situation on the ground following the first three hours gave a picture of complete devastation of the Iraqi military might and industrial and technological base. The reports claimed that the Iraqi air force had been taken out totally. From what the Americans themselves admitted later, the truth was that only up to 30 Iraqi aircraft were destroyed until mid last week. The rest are safe and well hidden in Iraqi air bases that have been only slightly damaged by the bombardment.

— The initial reports also spoke of the elite Iraqi Republican Guard being decimated. The second day the Americans said it was annihilated. Then on the third day, it was simply attacked. And finally, on the fourth day, a new phase of attack against it had just

started. Information from independent sources, however, confirms that it is mainly safe and sound, and ready to fight the Americans.

— The Bush administration's early statements faithfully reported by the U.S. media spoke of Iraq's missile strength being totally destroyed, meaning that the danger against Israel was drastically reduced. On the very same day Iraq launched 3 or 9 Scud missiles at Tel Aviv. The United States, apparently "outraged" by Iraq's "latest act of aggression," in this case against Israel, launched one of the most massive aerial strikes in history against Iraq targeting Iraq's mobile launchers, in what is referred to as a "search and destroy mission." On Monday U.S. military officials conceded that they were "nowhere near" wiping out Iraq's missile launching capability.

— The same early reports said that Baghdad was turned into a ghost town following the massive first air strike on the capital. Later that day, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was seen walking in the streets of

the capital and conversing with its inhabitants. The Americans of course had to say later that the civilian population was not one of its targets.

— In the early phase of the war, Pentagon sources reported that six Iraqi helicopters had been destroyed to the allied forces. The reports were so untrue that the Americans themselves took only a few hours to deny them. Later on there was Western inspired news that 50 Iraqi tanks had surrendered to the Egyptians, the news turned out to be completely groundless.

— There were strong rumours that Saddam Hussein's wife and family members took refuge in Mauritania. "This is the most ridiculous rumour I have heard. It is not worthy of comment," an aide to Mauritania's President Ould Sid Ahmad Taya told Reuters. Iraq did not even deign to comment on the rumour.

— The United States sent Iraq a letter reminding Baghdad that it had signed the Geneva Convention concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. When asked whether Iraq had

captured American PoWs, American officials denied it and said that the PoWs were safe in the hands of the Kuwaiti resistance. They also added that the reason they sent the letter was because American troops had captured 40 Iraqi soldiers on a Kuwaiti platform. The number of Iraqi soldiers captured had since then been reduced to 11.

— On Monday, General Norman Schwarzkopf said that the bombing raids against Iraq had partially destroyed four Iraqi nuclear reactors. This stood clearly in contradiction with the testimony of a French nuclear expert who confirmed that Iraq only had three reactors, including the one that was destroyed by Israel in 1981.

The list of American contradictions, half truths and campaign of disinformation is indeed long and complicated. We may have succeeded at putting our hand on only a part of it. But it may be some time yet before the whole truth surfaces. This is war, and it should be known to all that the first casualty of any war is the truth.

Baghdad

(Continued from page 1)

who had big eyes and curly eyelashes.

On the wall of the shop were pictures of two of his uncles who had been killed in the Iran-Iraq war. I asked him if he was afraid of the air raids. "If these Palestinian children can confront the Israelis, Iraqi children can also confront the Americans," he said.

After the first day things became more difficult for journalists. The Iraqis grew worried about reports that gave details of the damage to bombed targets, saying that if word got out the bombers would come back again.

Saadoun Al Janabi from the Information Ministry was the censor. Dealing with his was like handing an essay to a teacher rather than giving a despatch to the censor. I had only one problem with him. When I presented a story in which I used the phrase "the Jewish state," he told me it was racist.

Iraqi newspapers were carrying many reports emphasising peace demonstrations in Europe. The radio said a lot of things about Islamic Jihad and Arab solidarity. President Saddam Hussein spoke after the bombing. He sounded very composed and very controlled. It was both impressive and scary; the sense that he appeared so much in control.

He speaks like an ordinary Iraqi. He sounds as if he has learned from experience. He does not use sophisticated phrases, but the meaning is sophisticated.

Conditions in the hotel were deteriorating all the time. The hotel management neglected the guests; there was no effort to get the rooms cleaned.

There was no water. We were washing with bottled water, until we found a tap in the basement.

Last Saturday, I went to see my cousin from Bethlehem who wanted me to leave with her for Amman. I refused. I told her that if you leave you never know if you will be able to come back; you might end up as refugees. Palestinians think like that.

When I returned to the hotel I found that foreign journalists had been told to leave. The order, we were told, had come from higher up in the government, and there was nothing the Information Ministry could do.

That day, the third day after the bombing, a cruise missile was shot down, and part of it fell on the hotel servants quarters. No-one was hurt. We went out and collected fragments of the missile.

The same night I went to dinner at the house of Abu Ali Shahin, a veteran Palestinian fighter, who had gone with Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, into the Israeli-occupied West Bank after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. He was arrested by the Israelis and spent many years in prison.

We ate moulkhiyah, the famous Arabic dish made of a green vegetable, chicken stock and oil. Young Palestinian fighters arrived. They were euphoric that battle had begun. They were remembering Sabra and Shatila (the refugee camps in Beirut where hundreds of Palestinians were massacred in 1982 by Maronite Christian militiamen). This is the Palestinian attitude, to remember other wars, other battles.

Sunday was a bad day. Western journalists were finally kicked out except for Cable

News Network. The few Arab journalists left in the Al Rashid Hotel decided to organise themselves. Our first task was to get detergent and buckets to clean our rooms. We were trying to make the best of things.

Iraqis began appearing again on the streets. They seemed more confident. "We feel great, we're holding up," they would say. They also expressed confidence that President Saddam had something more up his sleeve. Confidence was building.

Everywhere we went people were saying: Where are the Palestinians? When are they going to do something? Even people critical of their president, and some people were saying this. They say he takes us for granted, he does whatever he likes.

Whenever an Iraqi sits down and talks to you about the president for an hour, there are a lot of contradictions. He's brave, they say, he's a man of his word, compared with other Arab leaders. At the same time they get very upset that he does things on his own without consultation.

They say he should not have invaded Kuwait. But every time he hits Israel they are proud. Every time they hear about pro-Iraq demonstrations outside the country they feel very proud. But they are angry about the lack of freedom and human rights. There is a national schizophrenia about the regime. People in Iraq want freedom, but for the moment the battle is a matter of life and death. After the battle they will want more. Young Iraqi men, for example, are critical of President Saddam, but also say: "We have to unite now." There are many youths on the streets armed with Kalashnikovs. This is some-

thing new in the past few days.

On Tuesday, it seemed that thousands were discharging their Kalashnikovs in the air. A rumour had gone around that President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt had been assassinated.

By early this week buses were operating again in some areas, and shops were opening. But when the government stopped petrol sales on Wednesday, cities across Iraq were brought to a standstill. Motorists were furious because sales were cut off without warning. On the road between Baghdad and the Jordanian border many cars were stranded, having run out of petrol.

Baghdadis are trying to come to terms with a city deprived of many of its services. The bombing of power stations had cut electricity, water supplies had been affected, and the sewage system had stopped working in some areas. People were scooping up water from the Tigris for washing and cooking.

Remarkably, food supplies do not yet appear to have been seriously affected, but people had in any case stockpiled food. Bridges and roads have not yet been affected by the bombardment. All bridges over the Tigris are functioning. The Iraqis have made some preparations for new ferry points in case bridges are knocked out. Food prices, high anyway, have jumped since the first day of the war. One kilo of sugar costs 7 Iraqi dinars or about \$21 at the official rate of exchange. A kilo of bananas is selling for 15 Iraqi dinars. Life seems more normal in the poorer areas than in the middle class suburbs.

In the Shi'ite area of Khazir people are fatalists; they are trying to go about their business as usual. A worrying thing is that there is much more hatred of Americans now. People have been threatening to grab pilots who are shot down and chop them into pieces. I heard of one pilot being stoned before he was taken away by guards.

The government appealed to people to keep the pilots alive, and when this seemed to make little impact, it offered a 10,000 Iraqi dinar reward for pilots handed over alive to the authorities.

While the U.S. says that it has exclusively targeted military-related installations, some civilian areas of Baghdad have also been hit. I saw two apartment blocks near the centre of the capital that had been bombed.

Residents of areas where military or communications centres are located say some of the bombing has been off-target. At first the Iraqi authorities did not give civilian casualty figures because they were worried about demoralising the public.

But starting from Wednesday, newspapers started publishing pictures of damage to civilian areas. The Iraqis have also started issuing civilian casualty figures.

I did not see black banners on houses; the customary sign of mourning for a death in the family. It may have been too soon for this. Everywhere I went around Baghdad there was talk of civilian casualties.

The Americans and their allies seem to have a policy of making three bombing runs a night over Baghdad, and they return to the same targets two or three times in succeeding days. I went to a site outside Baghdad that the Americans said was a biological weapons plant that had been hit three times. The Iraqis say it is a

milk powder factory. The factory is almost completely damaged. I saw a substance that looked like milk powder smouldering on the ground.

I decided to leave on Wednesday morning in a car hired by Cable News Network; it was no longer possible to file stories. I felt sad when I left because I felt I was avoiding my responsibilities as a journalist — covering a side of the story that should be covered.

Saadoun Al Janabi of the Information Ministry kissed me on the forehead and said: "Why don't you stay? You have to stay as a journalist." My last view of Baghdad was of the Tigris which has witnessed much conflict over thousands of years. I could not believe Baghdad would not continue to survive. I wondered, however, what will happen to Iraq in the future. Perhaps this is not so relevant. The important thing is that these are proud people and they will not bow down.

The above report has also been published in the Financial Times under the same headline.

Rafsanjani

(Continued from page 1)

which Iraq has adopted.

"On the Palestinian issue, our position is clear: We want to destroy Israel. We want Palestinian rule on all Palestine, not just on certain parts."

"But we should mobilise all the people, all the neighbouring countries, and then wage a holy war against Israel," he said.

He arrested that allied bombers have struck economic targets and residential areas in Iraq, and added: "We won't allow property and lives of Iraqi Muslims to be destroyed."

Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Thursday that U.S. President George Bush "is a murderer and a criminal for massacring innocent people."

Mr. Rafsanjani called the United States a "paper tiger" for failing to defeat Iraq's armed forces in a matter of days. "The world thought that if the United States decides, Iraq will be wiped out the next day."

He said Iraq's resolve was a good lesson to the United States. "In the future it will not be able to bully any country it wants," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

Condemning Western backing of Iraq in its war with Iran, Mr. Rafsanjani said "France and other countries supplied all kinds of weapons to be used for Iran's destruction."

He added that at the time "we had warned those countries that they were doing wrong." He said Iraq President Saddam Hussein had spoken of "more than 1,100 kilometres of land border and 800 kilometres of maritime borders" between the two countries in a letter to him last year.

"It means that if we help Iraq it would mean that they stay in Kuwait, that they have borders with us almost all the way to the Persian Gulf would be turned into the Arabian Gulf."

"Is this not suicide in your view?" he said in the sermon. "Even if we assume it is a war of the just against the unjust, how can we enter it and send the (devout Muslims) to die so that Iraq would stay in the 'Persian Gulf'? How irresponsible."

Several hardliners in the Iranian parliament, including former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, have said Iranians should forget the 1980-88 conflict with Iraq and join a holy war against the United States.

Mr. Rafsanjani said that during the Iran-Iraq war, when there

was talk of Kuwait giving its strategic Bubiyan Island to Iraq, he had declared after consulting with the late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that Iran would seize the island and keep it if it was handed over to Iraq.

"We could in no way tolerate Iraq getting its hands on the 'Persian Gulf'. How could we defend ourselves? They could make the whole 'Persian Gulf' insecure from the southern coast. Not a single ship could sail to our ports," he said.

But Mr. Rafsanjani said neutrality did not mean indifference. "It means that we will not engage in the war, neither on the side of the Westerners nor the Iraqis... we condemn the U.S. crimes and exert pressure through the United Nations and diplomatic contacts to curb the war," he said.

Mr. Rafsanjani said U.N. Security Council resolutions on Kuwait, which were supported by Iran, authorise the use of force only to drive Iraq out of the emirate it occupied last August.

"Destroying Iraq's economy and killing its people is overstepping the bounds of U.N. resolutions," he said, referring to Iran's condemnation of massive air and missile attacks on Iraq.

The letter Mr. Rafsanjani referred to was one of several exchanged between the two presidents between April and August last year, leading to peace between the two countries.

Mr. Rafsanjani said he asked a senior Iraqi official who later visited Tehran about the remark about the 800 kilometres maritime border. "He said this was the view of (Iraqi ruling) Revolutionary Command Council," Mr. Rafsanjani added.

An Iranian newspaper, the English-language Kayhan International, said in an editorial Thursday that Turkey should not become further involved in the war.

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McEnroe ends fun run; Lendl perseveres at Australian Open

MELBOURNE (AP) — Reality caught up with Patrick McEnroe and the percentages overtook Stefan Edberg at the Australian Open Friday, putting Boris Becker and Ivan Lendl into the men's final.

The mystifying run of John McEnroe's kid brother ended in the semifinals, but not without a fight. He won the first set in a tiebreak 6-3, but was on serve through eight games in the second set before second-ranked Boris Edberg put away the world's 11th-ranked player, 6-7, 6-4, 6-1, with the help of 23 aces.

"Fully expected," McEnroe said with a smile, when asked to describe an extraordinary two weeks in which he has established himself as more than just a doubles specialist — and just another McEnroe. "It gives me a lot of satisfaction to know that the hard work I've been doing has paid off. It makes me want to work even harder."

Edberg went much differently, but just as mysteriously. The world's top-ranked player blew two match points on a netted volley and a double fault in the 10th game of the fourth set and lost to two-time defending champion Ivan Lendl 6-4, 5-7, 3-6, 7-6, 6-4.

"Sometimes, it happens," said

Edberg, normally one of the world's steadiest serve-and-volley players. "Some weeks you have problems doing certain things and the next week it's gone. It can happen, and it happened today."

Edberg had 11 double faults in the match.

Lendl will play Becker for the \$250,000 first prize Sunday. A Becker victory would put him on top of the men's world rankings, ahead of Edberg.

McEnroe, playing singles in a Grand Slam tournament for only the second time to equal his better-known brother's best Australian Open showing.

He beat 12th-seeded Jay Berger in the third round and overcame a back injury in the quarterfinals to beat Italian Cristiano Caratti in five sets. At the same time, he and David Wheaton were reaching the finals of the men's doubles.

It may have been an overload of tennis for McEnroe, who had played 34 sets going into the singles semis.

Becker took the first three games of the match before McEnroe came back and forced a first-set tiebreak. The set was full of winners on both sides, and McEnroe was particularly effective at the net — not normally his strong point, but an area he had

to control if he had any chance of upsetting Becker.

Becker, meanwhile, couldn't find the groove. He yelled at both himself and photographers operating out of a shaded pit behind one baseline. Their shutters clicking as Becker served disturbed the three-time Wimbledon champion.

"Pictures," he screamed after two straight double faults in the 11th game. He settled down to hold serve, but McEnroe saved a set point in the 10th game and dominated the tiebreak with his serve and a pair of forehand winners on the last two points to take it 7-2.

Becker continued to chastise himself and argued several line calls in the second set. But his game was picking up, while McEnroe's was fading, and the 22-year-old German finally broke for 5-4 in the second set as errors started to fly off the American's racket.

"I told myself, 'calm down,'" Becker said. "I was serving better and it turned out to be the best match I have served in quite a while."

Volley errors cost Edberg dearly against Lendl. The net is where the top-seeded Swede normally wins matches, but he could not do it Friday, especially after wasting those match points.

Lendl broke on a backhand volley error in the ninth game and held for the first set 6-4, and kept Edberg back with strong groundstrokes through the 10th game of the second set. But Edberg held for 6-5 on a ace and broke on a backhand passing shot long to even the match. He continued to pressure Lendl's serve in the third set, breaking for 5-3 on a netted volley and holding for a 2 sets to 1 lead on two volley winners.

He saved two break points in the 10th game of the fourth set on a service winner and a backhand crosscourt volley into the corner to gain his first match point at 5-4, ad-in, and pumped his fist in delight. But the joy vanished quickly when he charged behind his second serve and netted a setup backhand volley right in front of him.

Two points later, on match point again on a service winner, Edberg caught the net with his first serve, then sent the second long, and Lendl was off the hook again.

"I'm sure it's happened to me before, but in a Grand Slam, in a semifinal, that's not going to happen too often," Edberg said. "When you have match point you need to put pressure on and hit your first serve, but I never did it on both occasions."

Ex-striker aims to knock Man. City out of F.A. Cup

LONDON (R) — A young striker discarded by Manchester City two seasons ago is planning to bring about their downfall in Saturday's fourth round of the English Football Association (F.A.) Cup.

Darren Beckford joined second division Port Vale after fans and directors scraped together the £15,000 (\$29,000) transfer fee for the youngster who made only 11 league appearances for City.

He is now valued at £750,000 (\$1.4 million) after scoring 37 league goals in the last two seasons.

"My game has improved tremendously with Port Vale and I hope I can be up there with Gary Lineker and Ian Rush in a couple of years," said Beckford.

"I don't think I still have anything left to prove to City. I could always score goals. I'm just grateful to Vale for allowing me to prove it."

Port Vale's ground has proved an F.A. Cup graveyard for first division clubs in recent seasons, with Tottenham and Derby both losing there in the last three years.

And Beckford warns: "We are a much better team than when we knocked out Tottenham. We are a better footballing side with some talented players."

City, four times winners, will be without player-manager Peter Reid, who is recovering from a knee operation.

Another young player hoping the cup will launch him from obscurity to national fame is Derek McGrath, an Irish youth international midfielder.

With only one previous first team appearance for Brighton, he

is earmarked to replace suspended team mate Robert Codner as the second division side bid for their third cup win over Liverpool.

Brighton created one of the cup sensations of the season when they won at Anfield at the same stage in 1985 on their way to defeat in the final by Manchester United.

They eliminated Liverpool again the following season. Jimmy Carter, Liverpool's recent £750,000 signing from Millwall, is making good progress from a calf strain and is expected to be fit.

But Liverpool, knocked off the top of the league last week by Arsenal, will be without suspended Glenn Hysen and Steve McMahon.

Paul Ince and Danny Wallace return to cup holders' Manchester United's squad for their home tie with third division Bolton.

Ince has missed the last three games with a groin strain and Wallace is including in the 15-strong squad following an eight-game absence with a damaged knee.

Full back Denis Irwin faces a late fitness test after limping off with a groin strain during Wednesday's League Cup quarter-final victory over Southampton.

Last year's beaten finalists Crystal Palace had their third round second replay postponed Thursday and they will now play Nottingham Forest Monday.

Meanwhile, Tottenham entertains second division Oxford in an English F.A. Cup tie Saturday desperately needing a victory to prevent their season from becoming a nightmare.

Tottenham, saddled with debts

of more than £12 million (\$23.5 million), saw their hopes of a lucrative Wembley appearance in the League Cup disappear Wednesday when they lost 3-0 to neighbours Chelsea in a quarter-final replay.

With their league title hopes ended by a recent run of just two wins in nine matches, the F.A. Cup offers the only chance of redemption for the London team who boast players of the calibre of England captain Gary Lineker and Paul Gascoigne.

"Oxford Saturday is a big one. We just have to accept defeat by Chelsea in the right vein," Tottenham manager Terry Venables said.

Venables knows defeat in the fourth round tie with Oxford, 3-1 victors over Chelsea in the previous round, will increase pressure on the club to sell Lineker and Gascoigne to help clear their debts.

It would probably hasten his own departure, too.

Venables, clearly unsettled by the financial crisis at Tottenham, has admitted he has been sounded out by U.S. national side for the 1994 World Cup finals.

However, he might take heart from the fortunes of Manchester United over the past 12 months.

A year ago United were struggling near the foot of the first division with boardroom infighting further undermining the club.

But victory over Crystal Palace in the F.A. Cup final last May seems to have revitalised the Manchester giants.

They are in the last eight of the European Cup Winners' Cup, reached the League Cup semifinals Wednesday and should prove too strong at home for third division Bolton in the cup Saturday.

League champions Liverpool, strangely out of sorts in recent weeks, will be wary of second division visitors Brighton.

Eight years ago Brighton knocked Liverpool out of the competition in the fifth round at Anfield.

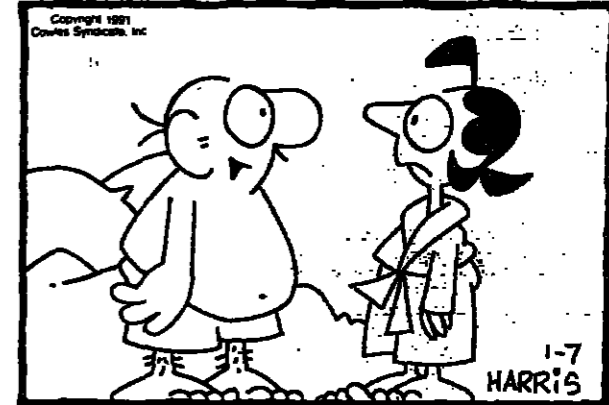
Brighton then went all the way to the final but that season ended in disappointment as they lost in a replay to Manchester United and were also relegated from the first division.

A year later they again took Liverpool's scalp in a cup.

Two of the most fascinating ties will be played Sunday when league leaders Arsenal entertain fourth-placed Leeds and minor league working travel to first division Everton.

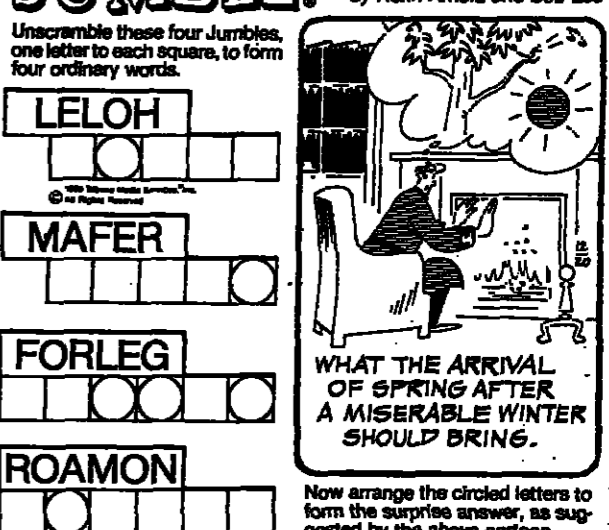
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THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"I'm ready for an exciting new look! Can you braid my leg hair?"

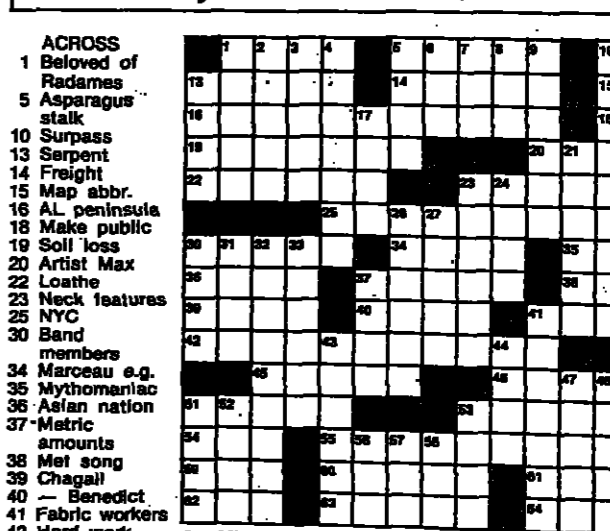
JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME. by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee



Print answer here: "LEOH - MAFER - FORLEG - ROAMON"

Yesterday's Jumble: GAVEL CIVIL LARYNX FAUCET
Answer: Some people who go "all out" often end up — "ALL IN"

THE Daily Crossword by Richard Thomas



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across: 1. Beloved of Radames
5 Across: 5. Asparagus stalk
10 Across: 10. Serpent
14 Across: 14. Freight
15 Across: 15. Map abbr.
16 Across: 16. AL peninsula
18 Across: 18. Make public
19 Across: 19. Soil loss
20 Across: 20. Artist Max
22 Across: 22. Loathe
23 Across: 23. Neck features
25 Across: 25. NYC members
34 Across: 34. Marceau e.g.
35 Across: 35. Mythomania
36 Across: 36. Asian nation
37 Across: 37. Metric amounts
38 Across: 38. Mel song
39 Across: 39. Chagall
40 Across: 40. Benedict
41 Across: 41. Fabric workers
42 Across: 42. Hard work
45 Across: 45. Flavoring plant
46 Across: 46. Agree to
51 Across: 51. Scrawny one
53 Across: 53. Fr. post
54 Across: 54. — polio!
55 Across: 55. Rosalind
59 Across: 59. Atlas
60 Across: 60. In profusion
61 Across: 61. N.A. Indians
62 Across: 62. Chess pieces
63 Across: 63. Talkative
64 Across: 64. Hold back
DOWN
1 Down: 1. Idiot
2 Down: 2. Nuns' skull
3 Down: 3. Compact
4 Down: 4. Monet and Manet
5 Down: 5. Kamelie
6 Down: 6. Duff's delight
7 Down: 7. Blunder
8 Down: 8. Before now
9 Down: 9. "varchoc"
10 Down: 10. Happen
11 Down: 11. Elevator man
12 Down: 12. Flippantly
13 Down: 13. Initiated
14 Down: 14. The two
17 Down: 17. Instant item
21 Down: 21. Flowering tree
24 Down: 24. The Dark
25 Down: 25. Refugee
27 Down: 27. Hull bottom
28 Down: 28. Refugee
29 Down: 29. Notable periods
30 Down: 30. Fourth dimension
31 Down: 31. Soviet river
32 Down: 32. Primitive one
33 Down: 33. City on the Adriatic
37 Down: 37. Vintner's containers
43 Down: 43. Coded signal
44 Down: 44. Ramon's room
47 Down: 47. — out (stop)
48 Down: 48. Swelling
49 Down: 49. Postpone
50 Down: 50. Annexes
51 Down: 51. Pretense
52 Down: 52. Fuel
53 Down: 53. Carson or Jefferson
56 Down: 56. Author Levin
57 Down: 57. Ad —
58 Down: 58. Tennis shot

Novotna, Seles to face off in open final

MELBOURNE (AP) — Will Jana find the atmosphere to her liking, or will her chances of a first Grand Slam singles title blow through the open roof?

Will Monica be able to stop grunting, practicing and offering opinions on everything from bubble gum to the Gulf war long enough to do as expected and win?

Will the women's championship at the Australian Open fall to one of the last products of the old Czechoslovakian tennis factories or to a giggling 17-year-old with the hardest shots in the game?

For the answers to these questions — and possibly the question facing women's tennis — keep tabs on Saturday's match.

The final under the retractable roof of the National Tennis Centre has second-seeded Monica Seles going for her second Grand Slam title against Jana Novotna, a surprise finalist and the producer of the tournament's biggest upset — a quarterfinal beating of

defending-champion Steffi Graf. Graf's elimination means Seles can close the gap on the No. 1 spot to a handful of points with a victory. That would add to the debate over who is the best women's player — Graf, on top for a record 180 weeks, or Seles, who then would have won two Grand Slam titles in the last eight months?

Novotna has won the only match the two have played, at the 1989 European indoors in Zurich, Switzerland. But since then, many things have changed.

For one, Seles has developed into the most feared attacker in women's tennis. The 1990 French Open champion does it from the baseline, with two-fisted groundstrokes from both sides accompanied by two-syllable grunts that seem to get louder as the match gets more important.

"She hits very hard. The grunts make it seem she is hitting it harder than she really is," said Mary Joe Fernandez. Seles' semifinal victim in a tightly play-

ed three-setter. "She goes out there and tries to beat you as bad as she can."

Seles had not lost a set — and had dropped just 12 games — before the 6-3, 0-6, 9-7 victory over Fernandez, who had a match point in the 12th game of the third set but netted a backhand.

The heat, about 100 degrees Fahrenheit on the court, got to both players, and Seles — already tired from a grueling doubles match the day before — just wanted to get it over with.

"It would have been a relief if I would have lost, just to get out of there," Seles said.

Novotna was bothered by the court conditions, too — not by

the heat so much as the sky overhead.

She and semifinal foe Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario warmed up with the roof closed and assumed it would be that way for the match. That had her thinking serve-and-volley, a major part of a restructuring of her game under coach Hana Mandlikova and the key to her upset of Graf.

But when she went out for the match, the roof was open and Novotna's strategy flew out the window.

"With the roof open, I didn't feel like coming in at all," she said. "I came in a couple of times and Arantxa passed me quite easily."

Ginther upstages Austrian compatriot at Alpine skiing

SAALBACH, Austria (R) — Austrian Sabine Ginther, who has never won a World Cup event, upstaged her better-known compatriot Petra Kronberger by setting the fastest time in the combined downhill at the Alpine Skiing World Championships Friday.

Ginther, wearing number 13, sliced 0.36 of a second off the time Kronberger had set and completed the 2.07-kilometre run in one minute 18.23 seconds.

Kronberger, who won a World Cup combined in Bad Kleinkirchheim earlier this month and has

dominated the women's season, clocked 1:18.59 with Switzerland's Chantal Bourmisen third in 1:18.69.

The downhill is combined with a Slalom next Thursday to decide the title won in 1989 by the now-retired Tamara McKinney of the United States.

Of the slalom specialists, who will have the advantage in next week's finale, Austria's Olympic combined champion Anita Wachter was lying 21st, 2.79 seconds behind.

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AKQ103 764 9 ♣KQ10
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♣ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQ964 78 ♠A1032 ♠A
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ Pass 1 NT ?
What action do you take?

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQ964 78 ♠A1032 ♠A
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ Pass 1 NT Dbl ?
Pass 2 ♣ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ92 ♠AK ♠A93 ♠A62
The bidding has proceeded:
East South West North
1 ♣ Dbl 4 ♣ Pass
Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠KQ92 ♠AK ♠A93 ♠A62
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠ 2 ♣
?
What action do you take?

Q.6—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ5 ♠A7 ♠AQ8763 ♠Q2
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♣ 2 ♣ 3 ♣ 4 ♣
? —preemptive
What action do you take?

British legislators urge European tax on oil to pay for Gulf war

LONDON (R) — A group of ruling Conservative Party legislators in Britain wants the European Community (EC) to slap a tax of a dollar per barrel on imports of Middle East oil to help pay for the Gulf war.

A motion tabled in parliament asks the government to propose to EC finance ministers that they should impose a charge like value added tax on all EC imports of Middle East oil since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

It says this would ensure "that the cost of the force is borne on a fair Community basis and not, as at present, by the nations whose servicemen and women are at risk."

Political sources said that, while, the proposal might not get very far, it reflected building pressure in Britain for non-

combatant EC nations, especially Germany, to help share the financial burden of the war.

Latest estimates of the daily cost to Britain are around £30 million (\$60 million) if the value of losses is included. The British have lost six Tornado warplanes, five of them in combat, each with a price tag of £20 million (\$40 million).

The war cabinet has asked Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd to compile a list of EC nations which helped Britain and which might contribute more.

Britain has so far received or been pledged contributions to its war costs worth around £900 million (\$900 million), about two-thirds from Saudi Arabia. German material help is worth about £20 million (\$40 million), officials add.

KIO denies selling assets to pay for war

BARCELONA (R) — The main business representative of the Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) in Spain denied speculation in international markets that the KIO was selling assets here to help finance the Gulf war with Iraq.

Javier de la Rosa, deputy chairman of the KIO-owned Grupo Torres, also dismissed suggestions that the recent sale of Torres oil and petrochemicals affiliate Ertol for 46 billion pesetas (\$490 million) was part of such a programme.

"This is ridiculous. KIO does not need to sell any asset of this size to finance anything," he said in an interview with La Vanguardia newspaper, published Thurs-

day. "KIO learned about the sale of Ertol when the deal was already signed," he noted.

De La Rosa said some news media in London had misinterpreted statements by the Kuwaiti central bank governor that the KIO might be forced to sell assets if the Gulf war was prolonged.

"For the moment, KIO has no need to sell. Its economic and financial strength is enough to support present costs," he stressed.

He said he maintained a personal, direct and constant contact with KIO and that, apart from the impact on individuals, the organisation had not been affected by the Gulf war.

Gas mask sales soar in U.S.

NEW YORK (R) — From New York to the Pacific Ocean suburbs of California, fearful Americans are buying gas masks at a faster rate than at any time since World War II.

The wholesale price for a gas mask is soaring and shops around the country say they can't sell them fast enough.

Many Americans find the war in the Gulf so disturbing that they are rushing to protect themselves against dangers that experts say are largely fanciful. The experts say fears are fuelled by TV images of Scud missiles landing in Israel.

One wholesaler said the price had jumped from around \$3.75 a mask in November to more than \$24. Prices in the shops vary from about \$15 to \$40 depending on when the stores received their shipments.

Sam Lieb, the owner of Jay's army navy store in Hempstead, Long Island, said he wishes people would just calm down. Lieb said he has never seen anything like it and he is 72 and has been in the army surplus business since 1946.

"A lot of people are coming here scared, as frightened as can be," says Lieb. "We've sold about 250 masks at \$25 each during the past week. Normally, we would sell just a few here, a few there to people handling poisonous chemicals or wanting them for Halloween."

"But people here in America are afraid for their own security. We tell them that they should not be frightened and that they are safe over here," he explained.

"We try to talk them out of making the purchase. I think the purchase of the masks out of fear of being attacked is stupid. But when I try and talk people out of it they become even more adamant. Their minds are made up," he added.

Ray Heller, manager of the Sergeant Supply, which sells surplus military goods, said he had sold 200 masks since the Gulf war.

Coverage is not cheap Businesses flock to war insurance

NEW YORK (AP) — Demand has been soaring among businesses for insurance that covers employees against terrorism and war-related incidents since U.S.-led forces opened war on Iraq one week ago.

At the same time premiums for the coverage, considered essential for overseas business trips these days, has increased dramatically, insurers said.

But as the Gulf conflict unfolded into its second week, the pricey insurance filled a sorely growing need created by limitations in the most widely available policies.

Most travel policies sold through travel agents and insurance brokers exclude coverage of war-related acts and terrorism, industry officials said.

Lloyd's of London and a handful of other large underwriters specialising in war-related coverage are offering special, high-risk insurance.

New York-based American International Underwriters, which calls itself the largest such U.S. commercial underwriter, says demand has soared for its insurance covering expenses associated with kidnappings and ransoms, wrongful detention by governments (including Iraq) and accidental death or dismemberment as a result of terrorism.

Costs vary widely for its coverage and are based on the type of company, locations of corporate branches and subsidiaries, gross revenues, company nationality and number of employees.

The cheapest coverage, for U.S. companies with no overseas operations, ranged from \$2,500 to \$50,000 a year at American International.

However, since U.S.-led forces opened war on Iraq on Jan. 16, the company has raised rates and has reserved the right to change them every 24 or 48 hours, said David Samuel, vice president of the special services division at American International Underwriters.

Samuel said the surge in inquiries came from a wide range of companies, big and small, and from a variety of industries.

On another business-insurance front, the cost of insuring ships and airplanes travelling to the Middle East has soared by as much as 1,000 per cent since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait last August, insurers said.

The prohibitive costs have already forced the major U.S. airlines, cash-strapped by weak economic conditions, to cancel flights to Middle East countries and has led oil companies to figure in insurance as an additional substantial cost.

EC average inflation rate stands at 5.7%

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — Falling oil prices in December kept the European Community's (EC's) average inflation rate for 1990 at 5.7 per cent, up slightly from 5.3 per cent in 1989, the EC statistics office Eurostat said Thursday.

After a surge in oil prices following the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, the EC's annual inflation rate peaked 6.3 per cent in October, then fell to 6.1 per cent in November and ended 1990 at 5.7 per cent.

The U.S. inflation rate last year was 6.1 per cent, up from 4.6 per cent in 1989, and Japan's 1990 rate was 4 per cent, up from 2.6 per cent in 1989, Eurostat said.

It said from November to December, consumer prices in the 12 EC states rose on average by only 0.1 per cent.

This means that in spite of the strong price rises recorded in August, September and October, caused by the surge in oil prices, the inflation rate for the Community as a whole in 1990 is not substantially higher than it was in 1989, Eurostat said in its monthly inflation bulletin.

Eurostat gave no figures for Ireland which calculates its inflation rate on a quarterly basis. The Irish was 2.7 per cent in November, up from the same 1989 month.

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Securities dealers trade on televised war news

NEW YORK (R) — Television has zoomed war from the Gulf right into Wall Street, beaming missile shots and air raid sirens to dealers' desks and transforming the way they trade.

Since Iraq invaded Kuwait, banks and securities firms have rushed to install television sets to keep abreast of the latest scrap of news — anything that might move prices.

Traders who grew up watching TV find it now dictates market moves and often determines their daily profits.

"We are trading off the TV," said Mel Swanborn, head of government securities trade at Yamaichi International (America) Inc.

If television reports indicate the war might be long or could be escalating, oil prices may rise and push Wall Street prices — especially inflation-sensitive bonds — lower.

If the "bad news" is not as bad as many had feared, prices can backslide in seconds.

Live coverage of the war has included interviews with reporters in Israel wearing gas masks — which could be bearish for stocks — and question and answer sessions with U.S. President George Bush, who may calm worried markets by assuring that the U.S. alliance with Arab na-

tions is still intact. Whatever the news, financial markets have fed off it — and trading has grown frantic.

Trading in treasury securities was already unpredictable before war broke out, fuelled by uncertainty over the depth of the recession and pressured by increased supply as the government funds the burgeoning budget deficit.

Traders who sought refuge in treasury bills — short-term issues that are considered a safe buy — before war and sold inflation-sensitive long bonds whipped last week as the long end of the market rallied unexpectedly after the first allied air strikes on Iraq.

The 30-year bond hit an overnight low of 102-19/32 on initial war panic, but rebounded sharply to a high of 106-20/32 by the next day on optimism the fighting would be short-lived.

It was one of the biggest single-day price moves ever seen.

The quicker traders have access to information, the more likely they can predict the market's next move and be fast enough to profit.

While trading rooms are already equipped with tickets and computers spewing out news around the world, television — with its sound bites and pictures — can often make news easier to grasp.

And while some traders say television is only partly responsible for the increased volatility, few deny its impact.

Sometimes it can take just one word.

When U.S. Secretary of State Baker told a Jan. 9 news conference that his last-ditch peace meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz had failed, there was a mass exodus from bonds. "Regrettably, ladies and gentlemen, in over six hours I heard nothing that suggested to me any Iraqi flexibility whatsoever," Baker said in the broadcast.

Lots of traders didn't stick around to hear the full sentence, let alone the full briefing.

"The whole trading staff milled around the TV. When we heard 'regrettably' we ran back to our desks and started pounding the market," said one bond trader.

That one word — "regrettably" — also lashed foreign exchange trading, sending the dollar higher as investors scurried for cover.

Television gives "the whole picture," said one foreign exchange trader. "You know if he is smiling."

"Baker could not even get the word 'regrettably' out," before currency dealers began buying the dollar, he added.

U.S. oil firms uncomfortably report huge quarterly profits

NEW YORK (AP) — Fantastic leaps in earnings ordinarily make companies exult, but that's not so for the big oil corporations, which are squirming over their Gulf windfall.

Not only do they want to convince investors such gains are nothing more than a blip, they also hope to educate a cynical public that considers them greedy gougers who should surrender the money to worthy causes.

The nation's nine largest oil companies are expected to tally \$7.2 billion in profits for the final 1990 quarter, up 69 per cent from \$4.3 billion in the 1989 period, said Michael Young, an analyst with Smith Barney, Harris Upham and Co. financial firm.

So far, Texaco Inc. reported fourth-quarter profits Wednesday of \$473 million, up from \$280 million a year ago. Even when special one-time accounting adjustments are considered, Texaco's fourth-quarter earnings were still \$383 million, a 39 per cent jump.

Amoco Corp. said earlier this week its quarterly earnings soared 69 per cent to \$538 million, while Mobil Corp. reported a 45 per cent earnings jump to \$651 million.

Chevron Corp. Chairman Kenneth Derr jumped the gun earlier this month by indicating quarterly earnings will be in the \$700 million range.

"They're going to be high, and they're going to create a lot of flack," Derr predicted, though he viewed the quarter as "an anomaly."

The results are not lost on a war-conscious public that has been monitoring developments in the Gulf — and at the gas pumps — since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August.

Bess Bezirgan, a spokeswoman for the Ralph Nader consumer group Buyers Up, has suggested oil companies contribute their enormous profits to the needy.

Other consumer groups and some politicians have called for a return of the windfall profits tax.

Such rumblings are not new to oil companies, which for years have endured sniping by consumers irked at gyrations in the cost of filling up their cars and basement heating tanks.

"Incorrectly ... the consumer generally views the oil company as almost a semi-utility," and William Brown, a senior vice president at Kidder Peabody and Co. financial firm.

"Just like water and electricity, (consumers) believe they should have gasoline supplied at a reasonable price, and therefore a company should not profit extraordinarily," he noted.

Oil executives are acutely sensitive to the public's perception of the profit picture.

"It's safe to say they're very worried about it," Brown said. "The industry has never had as good a public relations effort as it should."

Belgium lures multinationals with tax breaks

BRUSSELS (R) — Move over, Liechtenstein, Bermuda, Luxembourg and the Channel Islands. Here comes Belgium.

The country best known as the nerve centre of the 12-nation European Community (EC) has joined the list of discreet tax havens with an eight-year-old scheme for multinational companies which is now only beginning to bear fruit.

It offers generous tax breaks for so-called "coordination centres" which operate in fields from scientific research and publicity to the management of group finances.

So far the scheme, which began quietly in January, 1983, has lured about 250 multinationals, mainly from the United States and Europe, many of them over the past three years.

Coordination centres are incorporated like any other Belgian company but are banned from manufacturing goods, trading or working for anyone outside the multinational group.

They are taxed on a national

income rather than their actual turnover. Their tax base is determined as a percentage — typically about eight per cent — of certain operating costs excluding financial and personnel costs.

In an example given by the ministry for economic affairs, a company with costs of 100 million francs (\$3 million) a year would pay tax of 328,000 francs (\$10,000) a year — representing about 0.33 per cent of its total costs.

Tax experts say the legislation's main attraction for multinationals is in group financing, where firms can centralise their financing in Brussels and then channel funds elsewhere.

"Companies can have enormous gains and losses on foreign exchange hedging, but they do not like this to be taxed as commercial trading profits," said Patrick Kelley, chairman of the Belgian legal and taxation committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

He described the scheme as a natural for U.S. business.

One of the latest arrivals is British Petroleum Co. PLC (B.P.), which in May opened its European headquarters in Brussels to coordinate relations with the EC, refining and marketing in Europe and finance activities across the region.

Although Belgian officials deny the programme was designed to capitalise on the country's position as EC headquarters, businessmen say this and the central geographical location clearly add to the appeal of the scheme.

"Companies could do the same thing on the Isle of Man and in Dublin but there were geographical problems and difficulties with multilingual staff," Kelley said.

A cloud on the horizon is the advent in 1993 of the EC's single market, which could jeopardise the coordination centres.

"I don't believe you can have tax havens in a single market," said Ludo Vandervelden, a Daimler-Benz A.G. official who is helping organise his company's 13-month-old centre.

Another threat to the scheme comes from leftist politicians and unionists, who are pressing for a cut in tax breaks for coordination centres because despite years of

budget austerity — borne mainly by individuals through higher taxes — the country remains heavily indebted.

In July, it drafted changes to the law which would tax the centres on interest earned by their bank deposits and cut tax allowances on capital brought in to finance new investment in Belgium.

If the measures were enacted, potential newcomers could be deterred and some of those companies already established here might rethink their activities, tax experts say.

"Certain coordination centres which focus on treasury management could be seriously affected by a measure to tax revenue from bank deposits," said Jan Meyers, a Brussels tax lawyer with U.S. law firm Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton.

At B.P., the proposed changes have set off alarm bells. "A tax on interest from deposits would jeopardise things ... it would mean we were lured in under a false pretext," said Ruy Ruijter, manager of B.P. Europe.

Despite these problems, Belgian officials say the scheme has attracted the cream of international companies.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

TOKYO — Stocks closed firmer as overnight gains on Wall Street, expectations of lower interest rates and an absence of bad news from the Gulf. The Nikkei index rose 304.24 points to 23,573.25.

SYDNEY — Support from stronger offshore share markets sent the All Ordinaries index spiralling up 27.0 points up to 1295.6 — their highest level in a month.

HONG KONG — The Hang Seng index jumped 65.86 points to 3,206.36 in the market's heaviest trade in months.

SINGAPORE — The stock market closed firmer with across the board gains after active trading in response to buoyant overseas bourses. The Straits Times industrial index shot up 29.44 points or 2.43 per cent to 1,238.75.

BOMBAY — Share prices fell for the third straight day as the market laboured under the shadow of the Gulf war. The BSE index fell 15.69 points, or 1.61 per cent, to 956.11.

FRANKFURT — Market sentiment towards the Gulf war has switched to neutral, with the lack of detailed reports making it hard to assess developments. The 30-share DAX index gained 6.89 points to 1,382.05.

ZURICH — Wall Street's steady opening helped the all-share SPI index gain 5.8 points to 902.4.

PARIS — Investors put aside worries about the Gulf war. The CAC-40 index rose 9.23 points to 1,563.

LONDON — Wall Street gains boosted British stocks in late trade. The FTSE index rose 3.7 points to 2,103.

NEW YORK — Investors continued to find buying opportunities despite Gulf uncertainty. A late morning selloff was touched off by news Israel was under missile attack. At 1727 GMT the Dow Jones industrials were up 13.12 to 2,656.19.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Thursday, January 24, 1991

Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell		Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	665.0	669.0	Swiss franc	531.2	534.4
Pound Sterling	1300.4	1308.2	French franc	131.8	132.6
Deutschmark	448.2	450.9	Japanese yen (for 100)	304.8	307.8
			Dutch guilder	397.5	399.9
			Swedish crown	119.7	120.4
			Italian lira (for 100)	59.6	60.0
			Belgian franc (for 10)	216.4	217.7

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.9605/15	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1610/20	Canadian dollar	
	1.4855/60	Deutschemarks	
	1.6730/40	Dutch guilders	
	1.2545/55	Swiss francs	
	30.62/67	Belgian francs	
	5.0475/0525	French francs	
	1116/1117	Italian lire	
	131.95/132.05	Japanese yen	
	5.5600/50	Swedish crowns	
	5.8160/8210	Norwegian crowns	
	5.7250/7300	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	374.25/75	U.S. dollars	

TODAY AT

Cinema Tel: 677420

CONCORD

LAMBADA

Performances: 3:30, 5:00, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 675571

NJOUM

TOTAL RECALL

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.
Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155

RAINBOW

HONEY I SHRUNK THE KIDS

Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

TOTAL RECALL

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Cinema Tel: 699238

PLAZA

Adel Imam in

TIT FOR TAT

Performances: 12:00, 3:00, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15

Vietnam enacts law on private business

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — Communist Vietnam has enacted a law sanctioning and protecting private business, in hopes of reviving one of the world's most backward economies.

Vietnam has relaxed central of the economy and encouraged private enterprise since doctrinaire Marxist leaders retired and national reforms were adopted in late 1986.

The new bill, which the national assembly adopted Dec. 21, was signed by President Vo Chi Cong, said the official Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan. The law goes into effect April 15.

The Nhan Dan article, including the text of the law, was seen in Bangkok Thursday.

The 28-article law said Vietnamese citizens 18 and over had the right to open private businesses.

"The state recognises the private business sector's permanent existence and development, its

right to equal treatment before the law like other business sectors, and the legitimacy of its business operations," it said.

"The right to ownership of the means of production, the right of inheritance to capital and other assets, as well as other legitimate rights of the owner of a private business establishment are protected by the state," it said.

It said without elaboration that the law prohibits private business involvement in some fields.

The prime minister's approval is needed for involvement in production of explosives, poisonous substances and toxic chemicals, exploitation of precious minerals as well as large-scale production and supply of electricity and water.

Approval also is required for the manufacture of radio transmitters, postal, telecommunications, radio, television and publishing services special import-export services and international tourism.

EUROPEAN HOSTES REQUIRED

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Lithuanian parliament presses army to free missing citizens

VILNIUS, Soviet Union (R) — The Lithuanian parliament pressed local Soviet military commanders Friday to release six Lithuanians seized by soldiers after a fresh clash near the republic's capital.

The six were detained as part of a renewed show of force by the Soviet military, which set up extensive checkpoints in and around Vilnius during the night. City buses were halted and passengers' documents checked. Parliament officials said there were reports that bursts of heavy machine-gun fire had been heard in the capital overnight.

Three foreign correspondents were held for several hours and released, but several Lithuanians with them were kicked, beaten and slapped by nervous Soviet soldiers. They have not been seen since.

Audrius Azubalis, spokesman for the Lithuanian parliament, said efforts were under way to secure the release of those seized. "Attempts have been going on. The military seems to be avoiding any contact," Azubalis told a news conference.

In neighbouring Latvia, funeral preparations were underway for three of the four people killed when Soviet "black beret" special forces shot their way into the local Interior Ministry Sunday.

Coffins were lined up in a row inside the black-brick auditorium of the University of Latvia, surrounded by weeping relatives. Elderly women in native dress stood vigil, each clutching a single candle.

Black bunting was hung from the red-and-white Latvian flag, as mourners filed through the hall.

Estonia and Lithuania have also declared Friday a day of mourning. All three republics are locked in a struggle with the Kremlin over restoration of their

pre-war independence.

Azubalis dismissed Soviet army allegations that the two occupants of a Lithuanian government car had opened fire on an armoured car at a checkpoint.

He said the driver was transporting a large sum of money and was armed with a pistol for protection. He denied the Lithuanians fired first.

"No one with any common sense would open fire at an armoured personnel carrier with a pistol," Azubalis said.

The Soviet News Agency TASS said the Lithuanian government employees had opened fire first with a pistol and had been detained.

The driver was injured in the shooting.

The Lithuanians and the foreign correspondents were detained after driving to the scene to investigate.

The shooting outside Vilnius came two days after President Mikhail Gorbachev promised an enquiry into the killing of 19 people in the Baltics in the past two weeks — 14 in a tank and paratroop assault on Vilnius's television tower.

Gorbachev repeated his contention that the three pro-independence Baltic governments had caused the crisis by passing legislation that Moscow says discriminates against minorities and servicemen. But he said "unwarranted actions" by troops were unacceptable.

The Soviet leader has faced a rising chorus of condemnation from Soviet liberals and foreign governments threatening to curtail aid unless the crackdown in the region is halted.

Meanwhile people throughout the Soviet Union and governments in the 15 republics faced a deadline to hand in 50 and 100-rouble bank notes, withdrawn

from circulation in a measure that is intended to undercut the lucrative black market and that has triggered widespread public anger.

The parliament of the Russian Federation, the country's largest republic, failed to adopt a resolution denouncing the army action, despite changes to an earlier draft that criticised Gorbachev and Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov.

Opposition from about 50 mainly conservative Communist deputies torpedoed the resolution, which was sent back for further discussion later this month.

Gorbachev's decree authorising individuals to swap up to 1,000 roubles in 50 and 100-rouble notes left a trail of turmoil and personal tragedy as people scrambled to minimise losses to their savings.

The average monthly salary is about 250 roubles (\$450 at the inflated official exchange rate).

Many republics denounced the action as legalised plundering of hard-earned savings and said they could not complete the operation on time. Banks, post offices and special offices in factories were overwhelmed by people clutching wads of notes.

Major threatens to end aid

British Prime Minister John Major said Thursday he would consider suspending all assistance except food aid to the Soviet Union if violence against independence activists in the Baltic republics continued.

"If this does not improve we would probably suspend all other assistance except food aid," he told a meeting of parliamentarians from his Conservative Party.

Britain has advocated a tough

response to shootings in Latvia and Lithuania in the last two weeks, when Soviet army units moved against independence activists resulting in 19 deaths.

Britain was a prime mover behind a European Community decision Tuesday to delay implementing a big technical assistance programme in response to the violence.

The EC also opened a formal human rights complaints procedure under the charter of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Major, who had been planning his first visit to Moscow in the next few months, said he did not believe Gorbachev had wanted to use force.

Major said he had been unable to determine whether Gorbachev was acting freely or "under duress from someone else." He suggested Gorbachev may have been under pressure from the army or the KGB security service.

Major met Latvian Foreign Minister Janis Jurkums Wednesday and said Britain would maintain pressure on Moscow.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, who attended the meeting with Major, said Britain hoped Moscow would "return to that emphasis on reform and negotiations, particularly with the Baltic republics which we think is the key to the situation."

In Strasbourg, France, the European Parliament, protesting at violence by Soviet troops in Latvia and Lithuania, rejected a call Friday to speed up work on a billion-dollar food aid programme for the Soviet Union.

The Strasbourg assembly reaffirmed its decision earlier this week to stall the disbursement process despite a request from the European Commission for swift action.

Zhivkov trial set for Feb. 25

SOFIA (AP) — The trial of former Communist leader Todor Zhivkov, who ruled Bulgaria for 35 years before being ousted in November 1989, is set for Feb. 25, media reported Friday.

Zhivkov will be the first of Eastern Europe's former Communist leaders to go before a court.

He is charged with exceeding authority as head of state and Communist Party from 1962 to 1989, of illegally acquiring property worth 26.5 million leva (some \$4 million) and allowing other top Communists to buy apartments, cars and weekend houses at what the Bulgarian News Agency (BTA) termed "giveaway prices."

It is not clear what sentence Zhivkov, 79, could face. Bulgarian journalists have predicted he will spend between 10 months and three years in jail.

Zhivkov has been under house arrest since his ouster and is currently confined at the Sofia home of his granddaughter, Yevgeniya.

Charged with him is his former top assistant, Milko Baleu. It took prosecutors six months to prepare more than 100 volumes of evidence against the two. During the investigation, completed last July, prosecutors faced numerous attempts to interfere with their work. BTA said.

One prosecutor quit after a car crash and another resigned "for health reasons," the news agency said without further detail.

Some held aloft posters of Wang, who topped China's most wanted list after the Chinese military crushed the pro-democracy movement, leaving hundreds dead. Wang went on trial Wednesday after spending nearly 20 months in jail.

The demonstrators rallied in a downtown Hong Kong park before marching the two miles (3.2 kilometres) to the Xinhua office, which acts as Peking's diplomatic mission in the colony. Hong Kong reverts to Chinese rule in 1997.

No violence was reported during the three-hour protest, police said.

The protest was staged by the Hong Kong alliance in support of the Patriotic Movement in China. Peking has accused the group of trying to use Hong Kong as a base for subversion.

China has pledged to retain Hong Kong's economic and legal systems for 50 years after its takeover, but the use of military force to crush the pro-democracy movement has raised fears among Hong Kong residents that Peking could renege on its promises.

All of the areas mapped show widespread evidence of volcanic activity, including huge "pancake" domes 32-kilometres across and nearly 2-kilometres high formed by outflows of thick lava on the planet's plains, project scientist Steve Saunders said.

Lava channels hundreds of kilometres long also were found in several places — much longer than any similar features on Earth, Saunders said.

The images reveal long mountain chains, like those on Earth but uneroded by rainfall or running water, that are being pulled apart by Venus' gravitational forces.

"Venus and Earth are the only planets in our solar system that have linear mountain belts," said Saunders, of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).

The probe, also has sent back evidence that Venus' thick poisonous atmosphere was formed at least 400 to 800 million years ago. The planet's atmosphere, made primarily of carbon dioxide, is 90 times heavier than Earth's.

The images also indicate that strong, turbulent winds blow across the planet's surface forming wind streaks around small volcanoes.

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Baker to meet new Soviet minister to discuss superpower summit

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State James Baker announced plans to meet new Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh in Washington Saturday as the United States pondered whether to cancel next month's superpower summit in Moscow.

President George Bush was apparently putting off a decision on the summit for as long as possible while he watched developments in the Baltics, the Gulf war and negotiations on two important arms control agreements.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has been an important ally in the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq, but recent violence against pro-independence forces in the Baltics and the Soviet leader's shift to the Communist right has strained superpower relations.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Thursday moving the summit to a neutral country would be discussed with Bessmertnykh but he seemed to discount that as a serious possibility.

U.S. officials said they increasingly wonder about the extent to which Gorbachev is influenced by the armed forces and other conservatives and whether he can deliver on major commitments, such as arms treaties.

Gorbachev has said he did not order troops to carry out crackdowns on civilians in Lithuania and Latvia that have been condemned by Washington and other Western capitals.

Asked the U.S. assessment of the extent to which Gorbachev is controlled by the military, one senior official told Reuters: "I think we'd have a hard time answering that question about a guy who says he didn't know what his military was going to be doing in Lithuania."

Republican congressional leaders, in a meeting with Bush Thursday, recommended postponing the planned Feb. 11-13

summit to show disapproval of the violence in the Baltics, the New York Times reported Friday.

A senior administration official, who was not identified, said Bush's opposition to Soviet policy had hardened into outrage, and he was leaning towards a delay.

Bush told the Republicans that he wanted to present the delay in a light that would not weaken Gorbachev with respect to those who wanted a tougher crackdown on the Baltic territories.

Both sides would say the decision to delay was mutual and made because of the Gulf war and delays in arms control talks.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler, who announced the Baker-Bessmertnykh talks, rejected speculation the Soviet minister would meet Bush this weekend. She did not rule out possible White House talks next week.

Until his promotion two weeks ago, Bessmertnykh was the Soviet ambassador to the United States.

In recent years, U.S. and Soviet foreign ministers have unfailingly met in advance of each superpower summit, so Saturday's talks would be in keeping with that pattern.

The summit was planned so that a treaty slashing U.S. and Soviet strategic nuclear weapons could be signed.

Three weeks before the summit is to open, the pact has not been completed even though U.S. and Soviet negotiators have worked all week to settle remaining issues.

One U.S. source told Reuters the talks had been difficult, with the Soviet military exercising a strong hand.

He said it was understood the head of the Soviet team, Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Obukhov, had come from Moscow with flexibility to make a deal.

Top European official warns West against 'slamming door' on refugees

VIENNA (AP) — A senior European official has warned Western Europe against "slamming the door" on millions of East Europeans who may seek their fortune in the West.

Addressing a 34-nation conference on migration in Europe, Catherine Lalumière, secretary general of the Council of Europe, warned against falling victim to a policy of "every man for himself."

Experts fear that declining living standards, rising unemployment

and the threat of social upheaval are likely to lead to mass emigration from Eastern Europe, particularly from the Balkans and the Soviet Union.

Estimates for the potential number of refugees range from 1 million to as many as 30 million people.

In 1989, as democratic changes swept Eastern Europe, 1.3 million people fled Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It was the largest migration since World War II,

according to a draft document to be submitted at the conference.

In his opening comments, Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky noted that the problem of mass immigration extended beyond Europe.

"Millions of people everywhere are seeking new homes, and with the Gulf war, this number will rise yet again at a fast rate," Vranitzky said.

"The right to asylum and the rights of political refugees... must remain untouched," Vranitzky said.

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President worried about Indian democracy

NEW DELHI (R) — President Ramaswamy Venkataraman expressed serious concern Friday for the future of democracy in India.

Speaking against a background of three major separatist campaigns, Hindu-Muslim violence, political turmoil and tough economic times, Venkataraman called on politicians to rediscover respect for each other's views.

"We have to admit that the democratic temper in our country is under stress," he said in a speech prepared for nationwide broadcast on the eve of India's National Day.

"Sloganeering, not conversation, has become the normal mode of dialogue, agitation, not discussion, marks the relationship between different groups," he said.

He was particularly critical of the frequent wild scenes in parliament and the state assemblies, where politicians often halt proceedings with noisy and abusive demonstrations, shoe-throwing and walkouts.

"Some of the utterances of rival political parties give the

impression that they are no longer competitors in the endeavour to serve the nation but are bitter enemies drawn in battle array," he said.

"The first corrective we have to apply to our conduct in the legislatures is to restore cordiality, friendliness and mutual respect among the political parties," Venkataraman said.

He also lashed out at the Hindu-Muslim violence that swept through large parts of India in the last three months of 1990.

In the clashes, triggered by a Hindu campaign to replace a mosque with a temple, more than 900 people were killed.

"Religious hatred is no part of the Indian psyche," he said.

Also addressing Sikh, Kashmiri and Assamese militants, in whose secessionist campaigns more than 5,500 people were killed last year, he called for dialogue.

"Provocation, retaliation or revenge is not the answer to the problem. The path of violence has never achieved tranquility in any age or clime," Venkataraman

said.

He said he was not worried by the fact that India was currently being run by a government commanding only 10 per cent of the seats in parliament, backed by Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party, which has governed India for most of its 43 independent years.

That was just part of the process of achieving genuine multiparty democracy, he said.

Venkataraman said he was much more worried that the country's significant economic progress still had not reached huge numbers of people in the countryside.

He said more effort had to be put into development and said the government might set up a special fund for the purpose to which private individuals should contribute.

Venkataraman also expressed deep anguish over the Gulf war.

"The positive gains made in international relations: as a result of the ending of the cold war might be lost," he said.

ANC attacks trial of Winnie Mandela

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The African National Congress (ANC) Friday condemned the trial of Nelson Mandela's wife Winnie on kidnapping and assault charges as an act of political persecution by the South African government.

Mrs. Mandela, known to millions of blacks as mother of the nation, goes on trial on Feb. 4 in connection with the 1989 killing of 14-year-old black activist

Stompie Seipei.

Mrs. Mandela, 56, has said she welcomed the trial as a chance to clear her name.

ANC Secretary-General Alfred Nzo said in a statement: "Proceeding with this trial and with other political trials presently under way constitutes a blatant harassment of the ANC."

He added: "The National Executive Committee of the ANC regards the trial of comrade

Nomzamo Winnie Mandela ... as part of a pattern of harassment and persecution to which comrade Winnie has been subjected for the last 30 years."

He said the state had put her on trial to damage the ANC just as it was building support.

Mrs. Mandela, head of the ANC's Social Welfare Department, faces trial with seven others on four counts of kidnapping and four of assault.

From barren rock to bedrock of capitalism, Hong Kong hits 150

HONG KONG (R) — No fireworks, no processions, in short no fuss will mark the 150th anniversary of an event that led to a fever-ridden, rocky outcrop off South China developing into one of the world's most vibrant and successful economic powerhouses.

On Jan. 26, 1841, a small British Royal Navy landing party hoisted the Union Jack over a bare and rocky island, drank a toast to Queen Victoria and declared Hong Kong a British colony for ever.

A century and a half later, as the British prepare to pack up and go, it is perhaps not surprising the 150th anniversary Saturday will go unmarked and virtually unremembered.

The British, despite their penchant for pomp and circumstance, have no plans to mark 150 years of history that have transformed what was initially dismissed as "a barren rock."

When China resumes sovereignty of Hong Kong in 1997, it will inherit the world's largest producer of watches, its second biggest exporter of toys

and clothes, and operator of the world's busiest container port.

This city of six million people, crammed cheek by jowl into 1,000 square kilometres, 80 per cent of it uninhabited, claims to have the world's largest neon sign, Asia's longest escalator and the tallest building outside Japan.

The restless, shifting population drives an export machine that has propelled Hong Kong into the 12th largest trading state, earning them a per capita annual income of about \$11,000, second in Asia only to Japan.

Outwardly, Hong Kong is apparently thriving. Many people wonder how long it will last.

Doctors' waiting rooms are filled with healthy-looking individuals. They are seeking medical certificates to emigrate.

Crime is on the rise, police figures show. Foreign currency savings accounts, bankers say, are booming.

Vereran social campaigner Elsie Tu blames much of the rise in crime on criminal triad societies seeking last-ditch profits to finance emigration before 1997.

"I went to Peking in 1982 — or was it 1983 — and saw Ji Pengfei (the then Chinese official in charge of Hong Kong affairs) and told him I was worried about increasing triad crime before 1997," she said. "The figures bear me out."

In May last year, a self-confessed triad leader called a news conference to complain his gang had been prevented from muscling to the front of a queue for housing by three other triad groups operating in collusion with the police.

That, he told startled reporters, ruined his efforts to make a quick profit from re-selling sought-after apartments.

The Hong Kong government estimates emigration ahead of 1997 averages 1,200 people a week. Many are middle-class, the backbone of Hong Kong's economic success.

Joseph Li, a shipping firm manager, said before he emigrated reluctantly in December he would return as soon as had secured a Canadian passport.

Those who are unable — or unwilling — to emigrate never-

theless take precautions.

An elderly proprietor of a small general store said he kept his savings in Canadian dollars, which he regards as safer than Hong Kong dollars. Interest rates are higher, too, he said.

Given the political environment, commentators expressed little surprise the government decided to ignore the 150th anniversary.

Celebrations risk antagonising those feeling betrayed or scared by the prospect of 1997 and could irritate China, which regards the loss of territory as shameful.